

The European Parliament elections 2024: Getting more jitters from the mainstream than the far-right

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List of abbreviations

COD	Ordinary Legislative Procedure
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists Group
EP	European Parliament
EPP	European People's Party
EU	European Union
GUE/NGL	The European Union Left/Nordic Green Left
IA	Index of Agreement
ID	Identity and Democracy Group
INI	Own initiative procedure
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NI	Independents
RE	Renew Europe
RSP	Resolutions on topical subjects
S&D	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
PVV	Party for Freedom
VVD	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy

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Executive summary

A steady drumbeat of warnings suggests that the upcoming European elections in June 2024 will see as much as a quarter of the seats go to nationalistic, radical right-wing lawmakers. Such a prospect elicits great concern that the 10th European legislature could stymie EU integration and policymaking at a time when geopolitics and permacrisis call for more – rather than less – unity and ambition in the Union’s action.

Three main reasons lend credibility to these unsettling forecasts:

1. Radical-right parties continue to make inroads into power at the national level in the member states.
2. The European electoral arena has generally proven more accessible to them than many national parliaments.
3. Voters’ undiluted and sustained dissatisfaction with mainstream political representatives in today’s complex reality can easily translate into a protest vote.

In addition, poor turnout could also benefit the hardliners. However, even if the participation rate goes up again, like in 2019, and as recent polls suggest, the substance of the election campaigns could still prove auspicious for the far-right. By moving away from the anti-EU mantra and showing readiness to have difficult conversations on divisive subjects, the radicals can appear more attuned, and thus more appealing, to electorates than the mainstream parties. So, Europe might well be heading down a nationalist, protectionist, anti-Islam, and illiberal path in the upcoming EP vote.

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Where today’s apostles of doom and gloom are likely wrong about is the expected impact of the new ‘wave’ of radical right populists in the new Parliament. Focused on the pursuit of a more honest relationship with citizens, radical populists tend to only gesture towards policy when they win elections at the national or EU level. This makes them more eclectic and moralistic than programmatic, and so less dangerous in terms of direct policy influence. While this could change if they score big in the upcoming European elections, for now, data backs received wisdom about their performance.

Using roll-call voting records collected by Eulytix, this Discussion Paper calculated the average proportion of MEPs who aligned themselves with the winning side in voting sessions across the outgoing Parliament. The results reveal that the members of radical right-wing groups – i.e. the Independents (NI), Identity and Democracy (ID), and European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) – have been much less likely to agree with the outcome of a voting session compared to their centrist or left-wing counterparts. Consequently, they emerged as the least influential groups during the present mandate (2019-2024).

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In part, the reason why the rise of far-right parties in the European Parliament has so far not translated into direct policy impact is linked to their inter- and intra-group cohesion problems. Indeed, the analysis in this Paper shows that, apart from the NI, the most incohesive families in the European Parliament are the ID and ECR groups. The NI seems to be the least cohesive, while the Greens/EFA group emerges as the most cohesive group of all.

Similar results transpire when factions are clustered into coalitions. The coalition consisting of the radical right-wing groups (i.e. ID and ECR) transpires as the least able to determine policy outcomes, while mainstream parties appear best placed to call the shots on decisions. The study also indicates that radical right-wingers would need to win, on average, 72% of the seats in the EP to be able to completely control vote outcomes on their own – a reassuringly unlikely scenario.

Further exploring the cohesion of the far-right by policy domain reveals significant divisions between radical-right groups on budgetary issues, relations with third countries (for instance, Russia and Ukraine), and employment policy. Conversely, in areas linked to EU institutions, public health, and, most notably, the environment and energy, the radical populist right exhibits greater unity.

Judging by their preferred type of engagement with EP activities, far-right parties seem aware of their lack of real influence on legislation. Data shows that in the outgoing Parliament, the members of the ID and ECR groups wrote a disproportionately large number of questions to the European Commission by reference to their size.

In contrast, the number of amendments sponsored by members of the ID group in the EP committees is strikingly low in the latest legislature. But if their ranks swelled after the June European elections, far-right parties could gain confidence to shift from simply seeking publicity to trying to shape policy.

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To assess the potential effects of more radical right-wing MEPs in the next EP on individual policy files, the authors conducted a simulation study, evaluating how different the outcome of votes would have been if the far-right had a higher share of seats in the assembly, as recent forecasts predict for the upcoming EP elections. The results reveal that, on average, merely 827 out of approximately 17,000 investigated voting sessions – i.e. 4.8% of all cases – would turn out differently. The most affected policy area would be environmental policy (328 impacted voting sessions) and the only ordinary legislative procedure that would fail is the Nature Restoration Law. Thus, the direct, negative knock-on effects of more hardliners in the next EP should be minimal.

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This conclusion can help to steady one's nerves that the situation is not as bleak as it looks. But on the policy areas that emerge as more vulnerable to far-right pressure (including, beyond the environment, EU institutions, social affairs, agriculture, and external relations) – and which, incidentally, coincide with citizens' own list of policy priorities – the centre-right groups, especially the European People's Party (EPP), might feel compelled to move further right. They could do so by adopting the inflammatory vocabulary and restrictive positions of the radicals to recapture electorates. The analysis clearly shows that a potential realignment towards the far-right in a more right-leaning Parliament depends entirely on the political position and tactical direction that the EPP group decides to pursue.

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The mainstream's/EPP's choice is thus stark: turn against democracy through radicalisation or update democracy via reform. The former strategy, which takes the far-right as standard-bearer, would eventually backfire for the copycat parties but would spell particularly bad news for the future of the EU and European democracy. The latter tactic requires a change in how policies and decisions are made to fix the broken democratic relationship between mainstream politicians and voters. This dilemma makes for a dire but not hopeless situation. What is needed is for the political mainstream (above all, the EPP) to live up to the responsibility that comes with its great power in order to forge unity and leadership in the new European Parliament.

Introduction - Forecasting the far-right surge

With only two months before the June 2024 elections to the European Parliament (EP), political campaigning, lead-candidate nominations, and vote predictions are underway. On the face of it, it is another run-of-the-mill debut for a new round of EP elections. But a steady drumbeat of warnings¹ about a radical-right spectre hunting the very soul² of EU democracy suggests that the upcoming European vote is anything but ordinary: **nationalistic, radical right-wing lawmakers seem fated to shake the establishment at the ballot box and take over as much as a quarter of the seats in the next European assembly.**

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All traditional, pro-EU democratic forces in the EP are said to face unprecedentedly gusty winds from the far-right Identity and Democracy group (ID) and the nationalist European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR). While electoral support for the two largest mainstream Euro parties – the European People’s Party (EPP) and the Party of European Socialists (S&D) – is predicted to remain overall stable, the Greens-EFA group and the liberals Renew Europe (RE) are forecasted to lose up to a third of their current share. Such a prospect elicits great concern that **the 10th European legislature could stymie EU integration and policymaking** at a time

when geopolitics and permacrisis³ call for more – rather than less – unity and ambition in the Union’s action.

Will a consolidated block of in-house far-right Eurosceptics wreak havoc in the new Parliament? Will the upcoming European elections prove a “make or break moment”⁴ for the EU and its democracy? This Paper argues that **it is quite plausible that the upcoming EP vote will swell the ranks of radical Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and deliver to traditional, centrist parties results that feel too close for comfort.** In this scenario, the EP and EU could well go haywire. But before throwing in the towel and succumbing to panic, two critical risk factors warrant scrutiny: the mainstream’s, especially EPP’s, response and the relevance of specific policy areas.

To assess the potential impact of a record number of radical right-wing MEPs, this paper uses seat projections by *Politico*⁵ and roll-call votes data collected by Eulytix⁶ during the current legislature to estimate the number and percentage of voting sessions in the outgoing Parliament, as well as policy areas, in which the outcome would be distinct in a more right-leaning EP.

The results reveal that, on average, **merely 827 out of approximately 17,000 investigated voting sessions – i.e. 4.8% of all cases – would turn out differently. The most affected policy area would be environmental policy (328 impacted voting sessions) and the only ordinary legislative procedure (COD) that would fail is the Nature Restoration Law. Thus, the direct, negative knock-on effects of more hardliners in the next EP should be minimal.** This conclusion can help to steady one’s nerves that the situation is not as bleak as it looks. But to pass the reality test, **it is imperative that the political centre stands its ground on liberal democratic policy, rhetoric, and values.**

1. Gloomy prospects

The current forecasts are unsettling but hardly far-fetched. Three reasons lend credibility to the nagging suspicion that the next EP elections are out of joint.⁷ **Radical-right parties continue to make inroads into power at the national level** in the member states; the **European electoral arena has generally proven more accessible to them** than many national parliaments; and **voters’ undiluted and sustained dissatisfaction** with mainstream political representatives in today’s complex reality **can easily translate into a protest vote.**

1.1. RADICALS MARCH ON IN THE MEMBER STATES

Since at least the 1990s, parties that were once confined to the ideological right and left margins of the political system have steadily increased their presence in the traditional space of politics through electoral success and media coverage in many, including key, member states.⁸ Radical right parties taking on ministerial roles in coalition governments is no longer taboo,⁹ as they win on a par with the biggest players in their countries

or outright dominate the national electoral arena. Public opinion polls also frequently document their robust popular appeal.¹⁰

In November 2023, the far-right, anti-Islam Party for Freedom (PVV) came first in the Dutch general elections and in March 2024, the far-right, populist Chega stunned with a solid third place in the snap vote held in Portugal. Moreover, national-conservative, right-wing parties are currently soaring in the polls in countries like Austria (Freedom Party), Belgium (Flemish Interest and New Flemish Alliance) and France (Rassemblement National), promising to shift politics (further) to the right at the next ballot. Thus, past and recent experience suggests that **radical populists are not a passing, accidental mood; they manifest a clear and consistent trend to field/feed elections at all levels.**¹¹

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The popularity of such parties is, first and foremost, problematic for the countries in which they thrive, especially if they come in office and start attacking core democratic institutions like the judiciary and the independence of the media (think Hungary under Fidesz, Poland under the Law and Justice, or Italy under Forza Italia).¹² But **their success can also prove a liability for the EU.** As part of the government in countries like Hungary, Italy, Finland, and Slovakia, members of far-right parties now sit around the (European) Council table and enjoy direct opportunities to project their nativist and populist platforms with the intention of destabilising patterns of political interaction also on the European tier.

To be sure, **incumbency can prove detrimental for parties in power when they compete in European elections.** In the latest, 2019 EP vote, across all member states, populist right forces that were in government (e.g. in Greece, Slovakia, Estonia, and the Czech Republic) lost 3% compared to previous national elections.¹³ Yet, **anti-European populists are likely to be top-ranking this year in a dozen of other member states, where they are currently not in office.**¹⁴ Together with the fact that citizens increasingly perceive radical right parties as convincing political options at any election, they might score big in the upcoming EP vote.

And if they do end up tilting the balance of power in the next EP towards the right, **the results can reverberate and reinforce similar, existing tendencies in the (European) Council.** This development would be

consequential for agenda-setting and policymaking across EU institutions. **The effect could also spill back to the national level, where mainstream parties in the member states could come under ever more political pressure to refrain (even more) from their EU integration/reform ambitions.** Heartened by potentially solid gains, the far-right forces in the next EP could also complicate the approval of the inbound College of Commissioners.¹⁵

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1.2. EP ELECTIONS BODE WELL FOR RADICALS

Ongoing political dynamics in the member states might favour the odds of far-right parties at the EU level. Yet, these parties have tended to fare well in European elections. This is largely explained by the widespread perception that there is ‘little at stake’ in the EP vote in terms of policy influence and the allocation of executive power compared to national electoral contests. Hence, the label of *Nebenwahlen* or “second-order national elections”¹⁶ is often used to describe the European elections, where national parties simply rehearse national politics and citizens can switch votes at low risk: i.e. punish the incumbent government or “vote with the heart”¹⁷ by choosing opposition/small(er) parties, often new and more radical. On average, the number of populist radical right parties in the EP rose by 12.5% in the 2014 elections and consolidated again in 2019, when they won 161 seats – compared to 118 five years earlier.

If citizens believe that EP elections are lacklustre affairs,¹⁸ they feel less motivated to vote. This is why turnout is said to have remained consistently lower in the European elections compared to the national ones.¹⁹ **Poor turnout tends to benefit hardliners, who are better than the mainstream at getting voters to go to the ballot box.** Successive treaty reforms since the mid-1980s²⁰ might have gradually increased the Parliament’s powers and relevance in the EU’s institutional architecture. But, judged by participation rates, voters do not seem to have picked up on these upgrades. Turnout has dropped from 62% in 1972 to 42.6% in 2014. Except at the latest elections in 2019, when turnout went up for the first time in over two decades, reaching 50.7%. The higher level of participation in the previous EP vote was arguably a key factor why far-right parties had a poorer electoral showing than expected in 2018/early 2019.

Where the progressive expansion of EP competences seems to have ‘failed’, the previous chapters of the ongoing permacrisis (e.g. migration/refugee crisis, Brexit) might have ‘succeeded’, raising the salience and relevance of ‘Europe’ in people’s lives, and encouraging citizens to vote in greater numbers in the 2019 European elections. Of course, the 2014 EP vote also took place in a crisis-ridden context given the strong lingering effects of the 2009 sovereign debt crisis; and turnout continued to dive at that time. But perhaps the cumulative effect of a decade of poly-crisis²¹ had to first kick in, before people would mobilise to participate in EP elections.

If so, then all the crises that have seamlessly followed each other since 2019 (including the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine), in a world ever more challenged by transformative forces (such as climate change, digitalisation, or ageing and shrinking society), should also help in June to decisively arrest the long-standing trajectory of low turnouts in European elections.

Data appear to support this prospect. A Eurobarometer poll from December 2023 reveals that 57% of respondents are interested in the upcoming EP elections (up six points from 2019) and 68% of them intend to vote (nine points more than last time).²² In addition, a Bertelsmann Stiftung *Eupinions* survey from the same period reports equally high levels of vote intention (i.e. 60%) among respondents polled across the Union.²³

But even if turnout increases again in 2024, the substance of the EU debates that are now at the heart of national election campaigns matters a great deal for whether higher participation will thwart the electoral success of radical populist forces. **Far-right parties (e.g. in France and Italy) no longer run on an EU exit ticket but rather speak about the need to change the Union. This rhetorical adjustment could resonate with public sentiment that stretches beyond radical constituencies into the mainstream electorate.**

By moving away from the anti-EU mantra and by showing readiness to have difficult conversations on divisive subjects, the radicals can appear to cater to popular demand.

An ECFR survey²⁴ carried out in January this year in 12 member states shows that many **citizens – not just far-right voters – have a rather negative appreciation of the EU’s handling of recent crises**, i.e. the COVID-19 pandemic, financial crisis, and the wars in Ukraine and Gaza. **The same goes for public perceptions of traditional politicians’ performance and intentions**

when it comes to policy areas that animate voters, like climate change and immigration, which are also seen in negative terms. The recent farmers’ protests turned violent in Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, Poland, and Spain are just the latest example of citizens’ disapproving of politicians’ legislative efforts on sensitive issues.

Thus, **European citizens seem to be calling for a more self-critical discussion about the kind of EU needed and the role that the Union assumes in dealing with contemporary challenges** that ails people. By moving away from the anti-EU mantra and by showing readiness to have difficult conversations on divisive subjects, the radicals can appear to cater to popular demand.

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If traditional parties opt for self-congratulatory campaigns instead of getting real about the trade-offs and hard choices lying ahead, more voters might participate in the 2024 EP elections. However, they might also end up feeling better represented by radical right lawmakers when marking their choice on the ballot in June. The more numerous in the next EP, the better placed radicals will be to insist on influential positions as committee chairs and rapporteurs, or on roles with implications for the EP’s budget administration.²⁵

1. 3. THE REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY CRISIS SUSTAINS THE POPULIST FAR-RIGHT

Apart from national tailwinds and the very nature of the EP elections favouring the far-right in the age of permacrisis, unresolved structural problems with the state of European democracy and the functioning of the EU might also prove auspicious for the electoral showing of this camp. Radical populists worldwide are a symptom of disillusionment with democracy’s broken promise to allow citizens to influence and change policies in line with their interests and preferences.

A Pew Research Center Report²⁶ from February 2024 indicates that 74% of respondents across 24 countries believe that elected officials do not care what people like them think. 42% say that no political party in their country represents their views. The growing perception that people’s opinions no longer count in the governing of their countries and that politicians are out of touch with ordinary citizens has long bred a strong feeling of disempowerment.

This sentiment is even more pronounced in the complex and distant arena of European politics. In a 2023 Ipsos poll,²⁷ the public's perceived influence over EU policymaking was expressed in single digits: from 3% in Sweden to 9% in Italy. In a similar vein, the Bertelsmann Stiftung *Eupinions*²⁸ survey from December last year reveals that only half of respondents (50%) believe that the European Parliament takes citizens' concerns into account.

Without hope of exerting influence or bringing about change through conventional democratic channels (e.g. elections), people lose trust in established democratic institutions and practices. Public trust in the government and political institutions has been in free fall since the late 1960s and early 1970s, with political parties – otherwise key markers of modern democratic government – held in the lowest regard.²⁹ According to a December 2023 Eurobarometer,³⁰ merely three in ten European citizens (29%) put confidence in political parties and politicians to defend democracy in their country.

In the same poll, “growing distrust and scepticism towards democratic institutions” is identified as the second biggest threat to democracy (32%). It is also reported that almost half of EU citizens surveyed (47%) claim being ‘very satisfied’ or ‘somewhat satisfied’ with the way democracy functions, but the range is wide: from 26% in Bulgaria to 79% in Denmark. Even in member states like France and Italy, a 2023 Ipsos poll³¹ shows that one in two Europeans are frustrated with the way democracy works.³²

In the widening gap between citizens and their national/EU political representatives, the democratic legitimacy crisis keeps deepening and radical populist parties have found fertile ground. Indeed, the 2024 Pew Research Centre Report³³ indicates that public support for strong leaders, who can make decisions without interference from courts and parliaments, has increased since 2017 in eight out of 22 countries, including Germany and Poland.

So, Europe might well be heading down a nationalist, protectionist, anti-Islam, and illiberal path in the upcoming EP vote as populist radicals promise to vindicate people's growing sense of betrayal by traditional political elites. Ultimately, one thing is certain: **modern democratic political systems will continue to struggle with instability and uncertainty at every election as long as the manifold sources of widespread citizens' dissatisfaction³⁴ are not addressed at the national, European, and global level.**

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2. But the devil is in the details

It would be imprudent to disregard the severity of the current situation, which largely sustains the populist radical right's electoral fortunes and promises to deliver them substantial gains also in the June 2024 EP elections. But how concerned should one be if more hardliners join the next Parliament? **Will more radical right-wing MEPs in the new assembly put a wrinkle or tear in European politics and democracy?** Knowledge of party group dynamics in the EP and data analysis carried out for this Discussion Paper suggests that **the risks are not negligible. Yet, these risks stem less from the radical right itself and more from the political mainstream and the type of policy area under scrutiny.**

The risks are not negligible but they stem less from the radical right itself and more from the political mainstream and policy area under scrutiny.

2.1. MUCH BARK BUT LITTLE BITE

Radical-right parties might have pressed forward in recent European elections but, to date, they **have demonstrated limited transformative power** in terms of their ability to determine policy outcomes. As a “motley crew”³⁵ of very diverse forces, **the far-right has struggled to effectively work together within the European arena.**³⁶ Over various legislative terms, hardliners focused on a strategy of shameless self-promotion rather than policy shaping.³⁷

However, **the mainstream's temptation to fall under the radical's spell has already seen a toughening of political rhetoric and specific policy positions** in line with populist themes and solutions. This effect could intensify in the next EP if traditional mainstream parties break ideological ranks. As a result, it could become more difficult to identify and implement adequate policy responses to fundamental challenges confronting Europe and its member states in this time and age.

Using roll-call voting data compiled by Eulytix, this paper calculated the average proportion of MEPs who align themselves with the winning side in voting sessions across the outgoing Parliament. The result of each voting session hinges on whether votes in favour or against constitute the necessary majority.³⁸ Put differently, the analysis focuses on determining the average percentage of MEPs within each political group who cast votes consistent with the winning side.

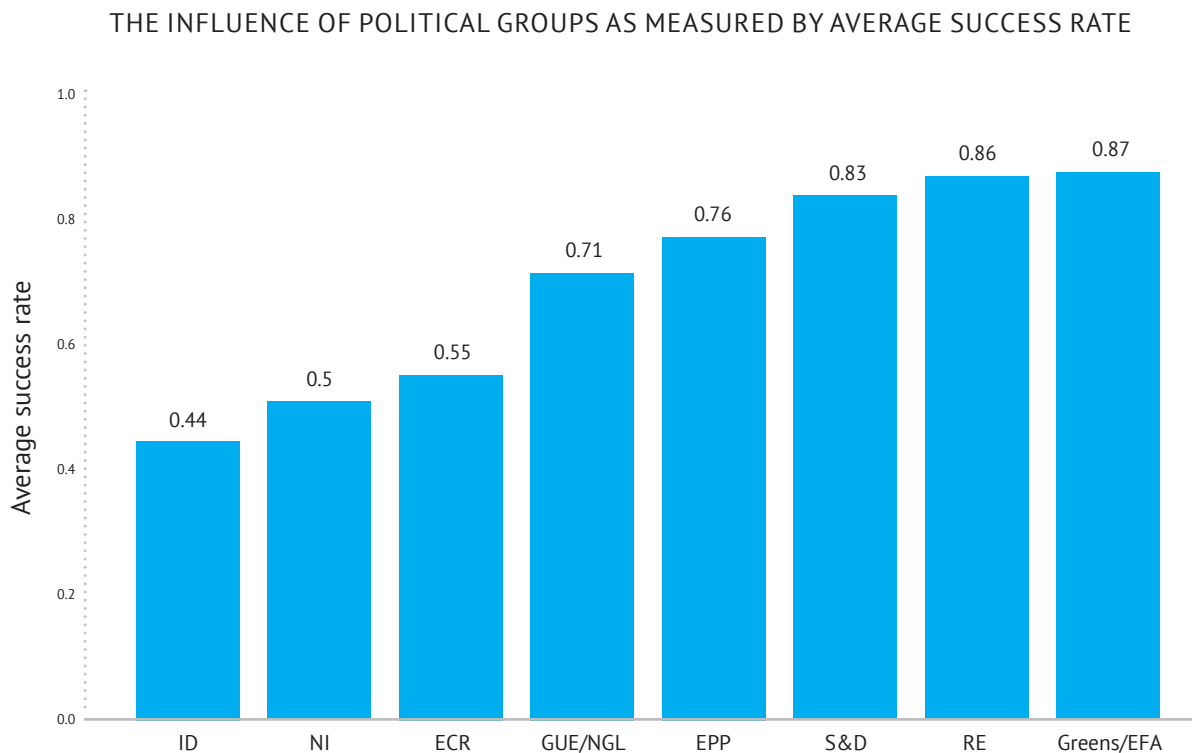
Radical right-wing groups (i.e. NI, ID, and ECR) have been the least influential groups in this assembly.

The results, shown in Figure 1, reveal that, indeed, members of **radical right-wing groups (i.e. NI, ID, and ECR) have been less likely to agree to the outcome of a voting session compared to their centrist or left-wing counterparts.** Thus, during this mandate (i.e. 2019-2024), they have been the least influential groups in the assembly, as by now received wisdom also suggests. More specifically, on average, only 44% of the votes cast by ID members were aligned with the outcome. The success rate of the ECR group was somewhat higher (55%), though still far below that of the left-wing and centrist groups (between 71% and 87%).

2.1.1. Weak direct policy influence

In part, the reason why the rise of the radical right in the European Parliament has so far not translated into direct policy impact is linked to the **incapacity of these parties to form effective alliances.** Until now, they either had no official group in the EP or saw their efforts to build a

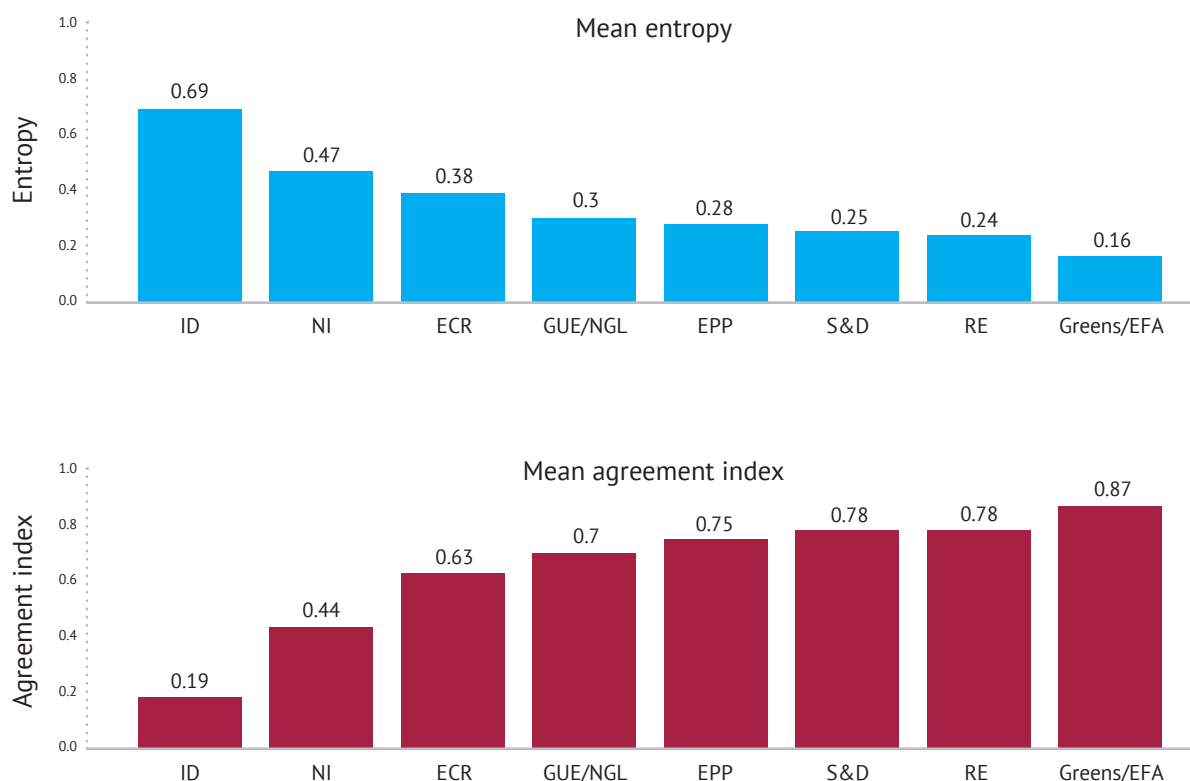
Figure 1



Source: Authors' calculations.

Note: By average success rate, we mean the percentage of voters on the winning side.

THE INTERNAL COHESION OF POLITICAL GROUPS



Source: Authors' calculations.

Note: Entropy is a measure of diversity. It captures the lack of uniformity regarding MEPs' votes in a specific group. The maximum value of 1 indicates each vote type has an equal probability, i.e. the votes of the group are totally out of sync, while a value of 0 indicates all MEPs cast the same vote. Agreement index, as introduced by Attinà (1990),⁴⁰ measures the uniformity of votes within a group. A value of 1 indicates total agreement, values greater than 0 indicate that at least 50% of the voters agreed with the winning outcome, while negative values mean that less than 50% agreed with the outcome. For more details see Annex 1.

pan-continental far-right bloc collapse under (often petty) internal strife; various MEPs also failed to find a political 'home' within any group. Moreover, the **inter-group cohesion problems of the far-right have generally been compounded by intra-group fragmentation.**

To illustrate their fractious character, this Discussion Paper measured the mean entropy and agreement index with roll-call voting data compiled by Eulytix. Entropy is a measure of uncertainty: the greater its value, the more evenly distributed, hence the less cohesive the voting choices of MEPs within a group. In contrast, the agreement index gauges the cohesiveness of voting choices within a group: the higher its value, the more cohesive the group.³⁹ Figure 2 illustrates the results on internal cohesion (or lack thereof) for the different EP political groups based on the mean entropy and the agreement index.

It is immediately apparent from Figure 2 that, **apart from the *non-inscrits* (NI), the most incohesive families in the European Parliament are the ID and ECR groups.** The NI seems to be the least cohesive, especially in terms of the agreement index, while the **Greens/EFA group emerges as the most cohesive group among all.**

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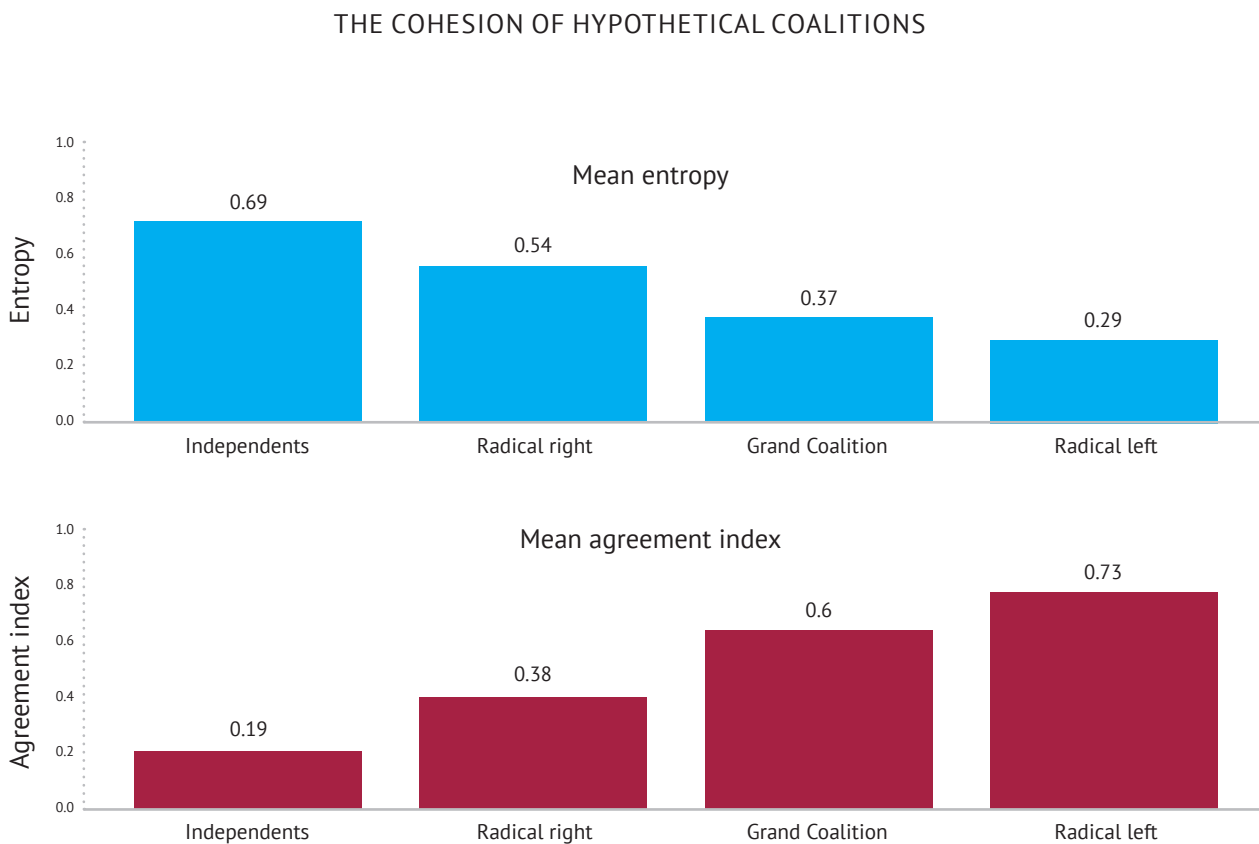
Similar results transpire when factions are clustered into coalitions. As Figure 3 indicates, the coalition consisting of the radical right-wing groups (i.e. the ID and ECR) shows the highest degree of entropy and the lowest agreement, aside from the independents. Moreover, in the same figure, it emerges that only 69% of votes cast back the main choice of the radical right group. This implies that if these parties wanted to gather over half of the votes independently of the other groups, their portion of seats, when multiplied by 69%, would need to exceed 50%. As a crude estimate, this means that **radical right-wingers would need to win, on average, 72% of the seats⁴¹ in the EP to completely control vote outcomes on their own – a reassuringly unlikely scenario.**

Radical right-wingers would need to win, on average, 72% of the seats in the EP to completely control vote outcomes on their own – a reassuringly unlikely scenario.

For comparison, on average, 80% of those MEPs who voted supported the majority position of the centrist group (i.e. the Grand Coalition: the EPP, RE, and S&D), and in the case of the left-wing coalition (i.e. Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL) this value is even higher, at 86%. Thus, the mainstream parties are in a much better position to determine policy outcomes.

Exploring the cohesion of the far-right by policy domain offers further insights. Figure 4 depicts the cohesion of these groups across the ten busiest policy domains, as measured by the frequency of related voting sessions. Notably, **within policy areas such as the “budget of the Union”, “relations with third countries” (for instance, Russia and Ukraine), and “employment policy”, significant divisions are evident between the radical-right groups.** Conversely, **in areas like “EU institutions”, “public health”, and notably “environment and energy policies”, the radical populist right exhibits greater unity.** Consequently, it seems plausible (and section 2.2 below confirms it) that the rise of radical right parties will pose the biggest challenge to this latter set of EU policy files, on which far-right forces tend to be more in agreement with each other.

Figure 3



Source: Authors' calculations.

Note: The coalition radical right includes the ID and ECR groups, by Grand Coalition we refer to the trio of S&D, RE, and EPP, while radical left includes the GUE/NGL and Greens/EFA groups.

It is also noteworthy that in the area of “free movement and integration of third-country nationals” – which incorporates far-right topics of predilection: i.e. migration and asylum – the radical right cluster shows greater than average cohesion, with an average entropy of 0.48 and an agreement index value of 0.45. Looking at migration policy, more specifically, which is a subset of the above, even higher – comparatively – cohesion patterns emerge, as indicated by a mean entropy of 0.44 and agreement index of 0.48. This domain is not among the policy areas with the highest number of associated voting sessions, but the results highlight the strong potential for far-right impact on this file.

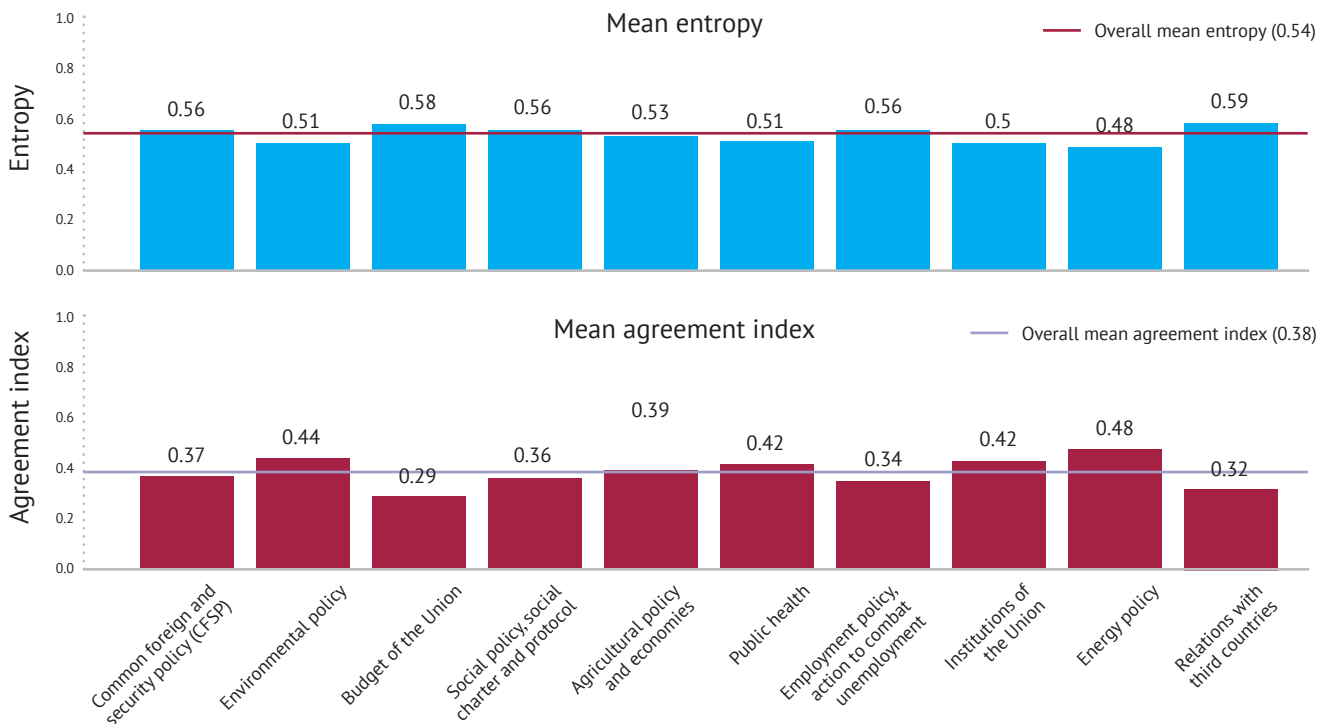
But it is not only their lack of homogeneity between and within different groups that has prevented far-right parties from impacting policymaking in the European Parliament. It is also **their generally scant interest in shaping policy** that, so far, has mainly kept them busy gaining media visibility with polarising debates, antagonistic language, and simplified solutions to complex problems – just as contexts have possibly become more diverse, intricate, and uncertain than ever before.

Offering viable policy alternatives and imposing their policy stances on decisions has not been an end in itself for radical-right parties. But this could change if they triumph in the June EP vote.

In this sense, their decision to join institutions that they often criticise, like the EP, has been rather opportunistic: e.g. secure party funds, amplify illiberal rhetoric, and raise their profile to also increase their popularity back home. **Offering viable policy alternatives and imposing their policy stances on decisions has not been an end in itself for radical-right parties. But this could change if they triumph in the June EP vote.** Greater numbers could give them the confidence to shift from simply seeking publicity to trying to influence policy outcomes.

Figure 4

THE COHESION OF RADICAL RIGHT-WING MEPS IN THE MOST RELEVANT POLICY AREAS



Source: Authors’ calculations, European Parliament.

Note: Mean entropy and agreement index values for all sessions regardless of policy area are indicated by the horizontal lines. The top 10 policy areas with regard to the number of related voting sessions are displayed.

Figure 5

THE NUMBER OF WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO THE COMMISSION BY POLITICAL GROUP

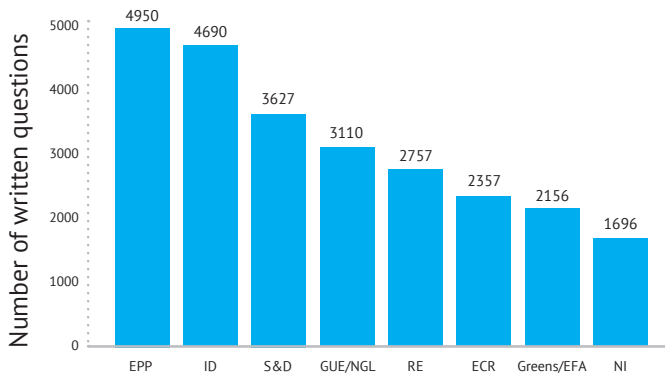
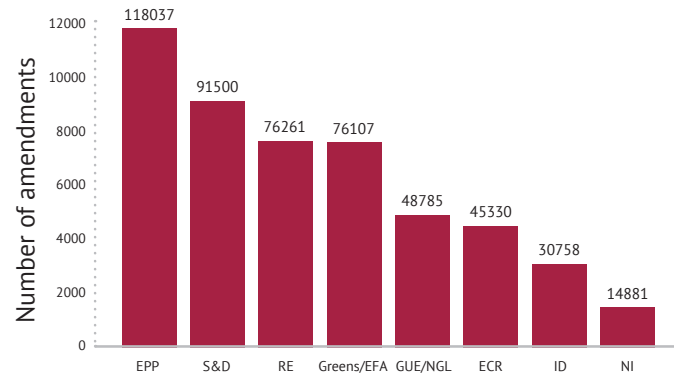


Figure 6

THE NUMBER OF AMENDMENTS SPONSORED BY POLITICAL GROUPS



Source: Authors' calculations, European Parliament.

Note: The number of questions written by members of the ID group is disproportionately high.

As an example of their focus until now, as shown in Figure 5, the members of **ID group wrote a disproportionately large number of questions to the European Commission in the outgoing Parliament by reference to their size**. This likely reflects their envisioned way of pressuring the Brussels executive in the absence of real influence. This observation holds to some degree also in the case of the ECR group in relation to the more influential centrist parties. In contrast, **the number of amendments sponsored by members of the ID group in the current EP committees is strikingly low** (see Figure 6). This suggests that members of the ID group have hitherto been aware of their inability to successfully pass amendments and thus shape legislation to any significant degree. Again, the 2024 European elections could alter this behaviour.

2.1.2. Strong pull for the mainstream

Against this backdrop, the question is not whether far-right groups will work together in the attempt to influence European policymaking: they likely cannot. But **they could still have indirect impact via the mainstream**. Thus, the defining conundrum is how traditional parties will react to a surge in support for firebrand fringe forces in the next Parliament. **Will the pro-EU, centrist groups ostracise or embrace the radicals? In particular, will the EPP avoid formal engagement with far-right populists or thread ideological lines?** According to polls, a pro-EU grand coalition between the EPP, S&D, and the liberals is still an option after the June EP vote. Yet, for the first time, the EPP, ECR, and ID could also form a right-wing majority

in the upcoming Parliament. So, the mainstream centre-right, especially the EPP, faces a crucial choice regarding its allegiances in the next mandate.

The risk of contagion on the right is reinforced by recent tendencies of mainstream parties to mimic successful rallying points and approaches advocated by the far-right, and/or open themselves for deals with the radicals.⁴² When **moving further to the right** over the past years on issues like immigration, the rule of law, and national security, and matching the populist right's language, the mainstream might have sought to capture and reflect public sentiment to (re-)gain electorates. But doing so **tends to benefit far-right parties**. Take, for example, the latest 2023 Dutch elections, where the centre-right People's Party for Freedom (VVD) tried to 'outpopulise' Wilder's PVV with promises to reduce immigration, only to lose out because **voters will always opt for the 'original' rather than the 'copy'**.⁴³

Moreover, the danger of **traditional political elites borrowing radical tones and tactics** is that it **can legitimise political incorrectness**, with potentially negative consequences for civil liberties and other core democratic tenets on which the Union is founded. **In response, far-right parties can shift onto even more radical ground**, and voters can follow the example of their mainstream leaders, defaulting as well on liberal discourse and values. **This can open a feedback loop of radicalisation**, whereby political leaders and parties radicalise to appeal to a polarised/radicalised public, which further polarises/radicalises the public, which then pushes politics to keep polarising/radicalising, as in a vicious, perpetual circle.⁴⁴

Traditional political elites borrowing radical tones and tactics can open a feedback loop of radicalisation.

At the European level, tensions are already brewing within the coalition of mainstream groups regarding, for example, disagreements over green policies.⁴⁵ Such fault lines, “could drag the EPP rightwards and jeopardise crucial environmental goals, migrant rights and future enlargement plans.”⁴⁶ Moreover, research⁴⁷ suggests that mainstream parties – including those that maintained a *cordon sanitaire* against cooperation with radicals in their home countries – have in the past not shunned away from allying with them at the EU level (e.g. the Christian Democratic Union of Germany). These instances set dangerous precedents.

However, the same study also reveals that these practices are a slippery slope not just for EU policy action and democratic standing; they are increasingly a liability for the centre-right parties that cooperate with the radical right. Public awareness of this type of alliance is growing, and mainstream voters strongly disapprove of them, threatening to punish their party at the next national election if it overreaches to the right in the EU.

2.2. SIMULATION EXPERIMENT FOR THE FAR-RIGHT’S POLICY IMPACT

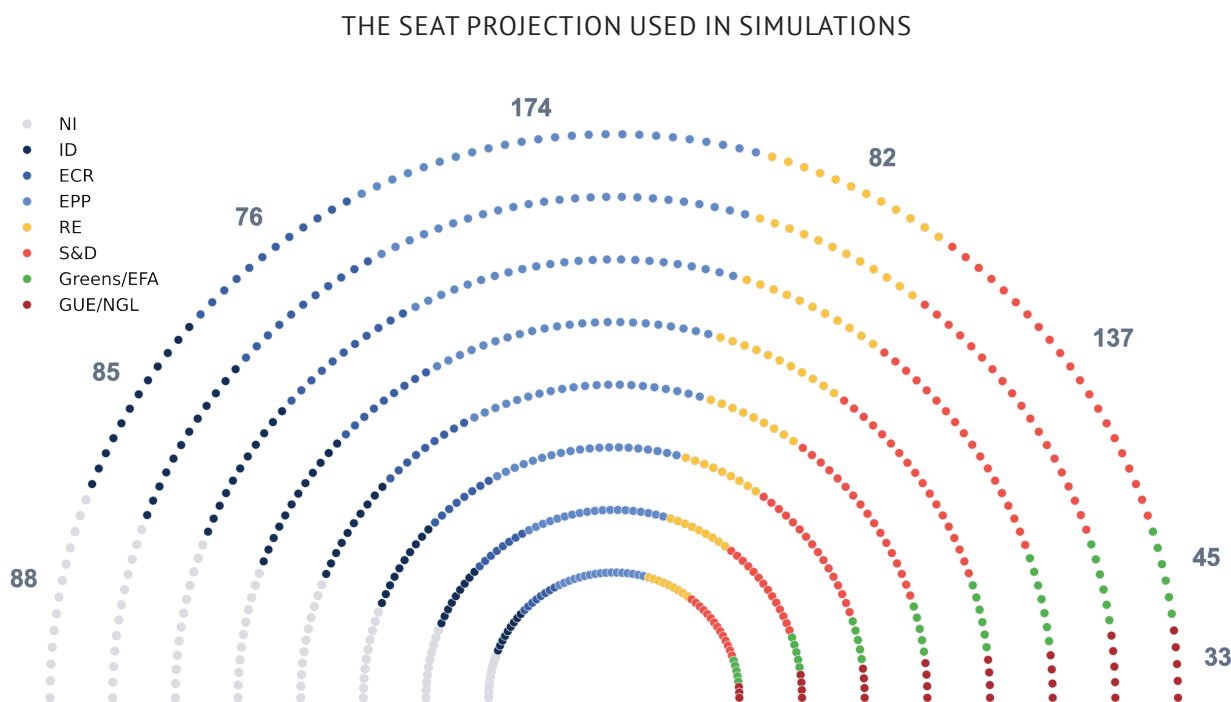
Ultimately, whether the mainstream centre-right groups, especially the EPP, will consider potential reputational costs before seeking inspiration and partners on the far-right, the temptation is certainly there. **Will specific policy files hold the key to understanding the real impact that more far-right forces in the next Parliament and a potentially fickle mainstream will have for the future of the EU and European democracy?**

To assess the potential effects of more radical right-wing MEPs in the next EP on individual policy files, the authors conducted a simulation study based on roll-call votes during plenary sessions in the latest EP term (2019-2024).⁴⁸ The fundamental aim of this simulation was to evaluate how different the outcome of votes would have been if the far-right had a higher share of seats in the assembly, as recent forecasts predict for the upcoming European elections.

To this end, counterfactual scenarios were simulated. In these scenarios, the vote distribution of each political group was preserved, while simultaneously the number of MEPs belonging to the respective groups was adjusted to reflect the likely seat projection (Figure 7).

This procedure can determine on average how many voting sessions would have had a different outcome given the adjusted distribution of seats.

Figure 7



Source: Politico.

Note: Seats as estimated by Politico’s Poll, March 3, 2024.

Moreover, it can reveal the likelihood that the outcome of a specific voting session would have changed (or not). The methodological foundations of the procedure are laid out in more detail in Annex II.

The results reveal that **out of more than 17,000 voting sessions, on average, 827 would have had a different outcome** given the projected seat distribution. This finding is remarkable as it indicates that **only about 4.8%, i.e. less than 5% of the voting sessions** counted, **would be affected by a boost in the numbers of far-right parties in the next EP**. The result suggests that **the direct policy impact of an increased share of radical right-wing MEPs can be expected to be marginal**.

Less than 5% of the voting sessions counted, would be affected by a boost in the numbers of far-right parties in the next EP.

Furthermore, **the most affected policy areas⁴⁹ would be environmental policy (328 affected voting sessions), agricultural policy (142), EU institutions (112), social policy (102), as well as common foreign and security policy (90)**. All these are critically important areas, not only because they have already proven divisive at the political level but also **because they correspond to top priorities identified by citizens⁵⁰** and therefore lend themselves more easily to higher levels of politicisation both at the European and national levels. For the impact on the full list of policy area, please see Annex IV.

The most affected policy areas would be environmental policy, agricultural policy, EU institutions, social policy, as well as common foreign and security policy.

Zooming into the specific voting sessions that were affected, it becomes clear that every single voting session with a greater than 50% chance of having a different outcome was originally voted through by a broad coalition of liberal and left-wing parties, i.e. RE, the S&D, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups. This reveals that, on these files, the moderate right-wing EPP group voted with the ECR and ID. Thus, in these cases, it would

suffice for the EPP to stick to past voting patterns for the outcome to change in a rightward direction.

Clearly, not all voting sessions are equally significant. MEPs often vote on amendments, which may be important, but obviously more is at stake in final votes or in votes on rejections, as these have the potential to completely axe a legislative or other type of procedure. Annex V documents those procedures⁵¹ that would have most likely failed in a much more right-leaning Parliament. The results show that **merely 12 procedures would have fallen through and only one of these, i.e. the Nature restoration law (2022/0195(COD)), is a legislative procedure where the EP and Council are on equal footing** to adopt legislation.

Merely 12 procedures would have fallen through and only one of these, i.e. the Nature restoration law, is a legislative procedure where the EP and Council are on equal footing.

The **other relevant procedures that would be affected include a proposal for legislation to reform how MEPs are elected,⁵² as well as on various human rights and migration-related (or FRONTEX) files**. Given that discussions about both EU institutional reform and migration/integration issues remain relevant and are likely to gain momentum after the June EP elections, in a geopolitical context that is volatile and could deteriorate (especially if Donald Trump wins a new term in the US presidential elections November), the risk that these dossiers are negatively affected cannot be ruled out.

In the end, **the key takeaway from these findings is that there are certain policy issues/areas that drive a wedge between the members of the Grand Coalition of centrist parties**. This rift essentially corresponds to the traditional left-right cleavage. In these cases, the right might exploit their potential superiority in numbers to influence policy outcomes in the EP. It should be noted, however, that this realignment depends entirely on the political position and tactical direction that the EPP group decides to pursue. **This gives the EPP great power to call the shots on policymaking choices in the upcoming Parliament**. But with great power comes also great responsibility, in this case to safeguard European democratic values and contribute to devising European solutions to the many and ever more pressing problems of all member states and their citizens.

3. A brave new world

The 2024 European elections take place in a context defined by profound economic, social, and political change. For decades, crises have been stacking atop one another, the demographic and cultural foundations of European societies have been transformed, and the very structure of representative democracy has been tested. **Mainstream politicians seem overwhelmed:** most of yesteryear's challenges remain unresolved and new powerful forces seem to be constantly gathering steam. **Voters are tired of problems and uncertainty** but cannot rely on their political representatives to veer them towards a more promising future.

As a result of growing public disenchantment with the political establishment, traditional parties have been losing ground to radical right political entrepreneurs who claim to represent voters in a way that the mainstream no longer does or can. **The far-right's insurrection against the 'elites' is not about their proposed 'easy' solutions** – which are often neither feasible nor in the interest of the EU and its citizens. **It is first and foremost about the promise of a more honest relationship with the people**, which electorates crave.⁵³ Focused on the pursuit of a coveted re-connection with the public, radical populists only gesture towards policy when they win elections at national or European level. This makes them more eclectic and moralistic than programmatic, and so less dangerous in terms of direct policy influence, as data here also shows. However, **the centre-right can still help the populist right to indirectly lead the EU away from a liberal democratic discourse or overdue and difficult reforms.**

Far-right parties are going nowhere because none of the EU's protracted institutional and contextual factors have come to pass. **Recent projections of a further and significant increase in the number of incoming MEPs after the June EP vote are thus quite plausible.** **Where today's apostles of doom and gloom are likely wrong is with regard to the expected impact of the new 'wave' of radical right populists in the new Parliament.** The analysis in this paper suggests that past experience with the performance of the far-right at the European level will probably hold true again: **in the previous term, merely 4.8% of policy votes would have turned out differently in a more right-leaning EP, and the only ordinary legislative procedure that would have failed is the Nature Restoration Law.**

Yet, data also reveals that certain policy areas are more vulnerable than others to far-right pressure. **Issues linked to the environment, EU institutions, social affairs, agriculture, and external relations could be struck by a net right-wing policy approach.** Since all these areas also top voters' list of priorities and touch on deep chords in society, centre-right groups (e.g. EPP)

might feel compelled to move further right, adopting the inflammatory vocabulary and restrictive positions of the radicals to recapture electorates. Environmental policy, in particular, emerges susceptible to such swings, which could derail the Union's Green Deal ambitions and delay progress in reaching the bloc's climate neutrality goals. But ongoing discussions and efforts to reform the EU's operating system in preparation for a potential enlargement to 30+ members and in response to current geopolitical imperatives could suffer the same.

The radicals have already given mainstream parties at the national and European level the flu. The question is whether the centre-right in the next Parliament will catch pneumonia. **The mainstream's/EPP's choice is stark: turn against democracy through radicalisation or update democracy via reform.** The former strategy, which takes the far-right as standard-bearer, would eventually backfire for the copy-cat parties but would spell particularly bad news for the future of the EU and European democracy.

The latter tactic requires a change in how policies and decisions are made to fix the broken democratic relationship with voters. This course of action goes beyond policy delivery, which remains a crucial responsibility for traditional parties but is no longer enough. Contemporary voters also care about the why and how of the decisions taken. In this sense, **the mainstream should invest in developing a more candid and meaningful political and institutional engagement with citizens.** To some extent, this means that **political campaigns and debates should cover the pros and cons of different policy options for various groups in society**, the inherent trade-offs between policy actions and on a personal level, **clearly making the case for the final hard choice.** But it also calls for **better and new instruments of citizens' participation** to be introduced in a diligent effort to make European democracy more participatory, enrich representative democracy, and improve the legitimacy and effectiveness of European governance.⁵⁴ **Policymakers need citizens' buy-in for the weighty decision lying ahead**, and they can only achieve it by revising their communication style and by allowing people to co-determine the future of their continent.

In the end, **the far-right nuisance looming (again) in the upcoming EP vote and the results of the analysis in this paper serve as a powerful reminder of what the key priorities are and where the political mainstream has the responsibility to forge unity and leadership after the June elections.** The present situation might be dire, but it's not hopeless: what it takes is leadership, and now is when Europe needs it.

Annex I: Description of the dataset

The roll-call voting data, as well as the auxiliary datasets pertaining to amendments and questions for written answers, was obtained and structured by Eulytix from the EP’s website. The collection of these data involved the process often referred to as “web scraping”, which means the collection and parsing of online documents. As the source documents published by the EP sometimes contain errors, some minor inaccuracies may be present in the dataset despite our best efforts to identify and correct them. For further questions, requests for access or remarks, please contact: research@eulytix.eu.

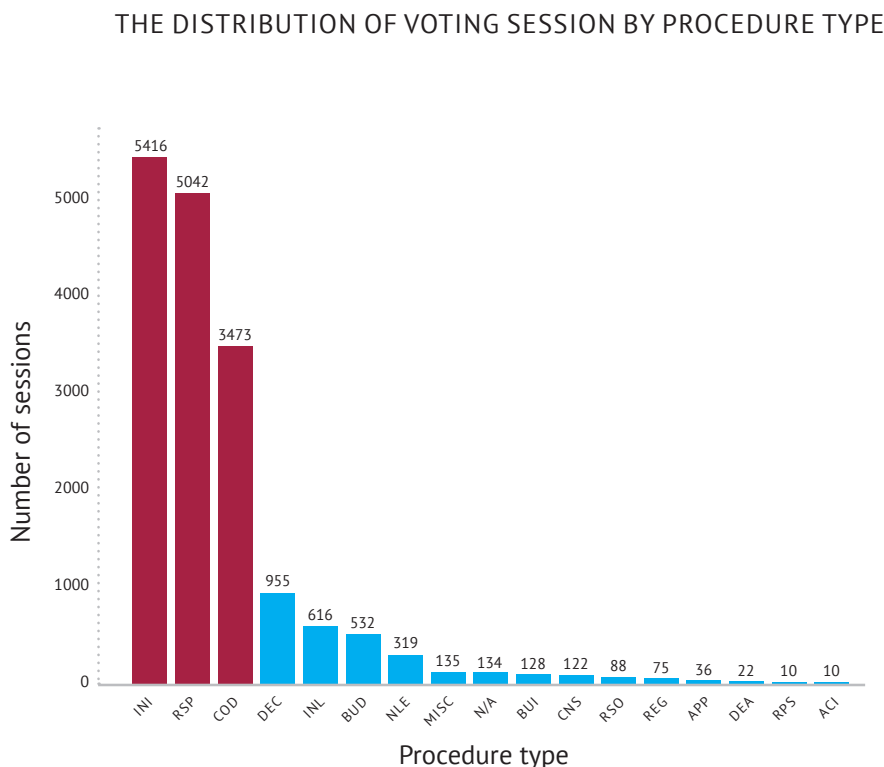
The voting dataset contains various auxiliary information alongside voter choices. Part of these concern the voting sessions themselves, such as related procedures or policy areas, while others are the voters, i.e. MEPs, such as their member state, or political group at the time of the voting session.

As Figure 7 depicts, most voting sessions are related to own initiatives (INI), resolutions on topical subjects (RSP), and ordinary legislative procedures (COD).

This comes as no surprise. This observation simply highlights the proactivity of the EP. On average, the number of sessions related to a specific procedure type is influenced by the number of procedures. As the number of ordinary legislative procedures is controlled by the European Commission, it is obvious that the industry of the EP can mostly be seen at INI and RSP procedures.

Policy areas corresponding to a voting session are determined by the related legislative or non-legislative procedure. Once related procedures have been identified, policy areas or subjects relevant to the procedure are collected from the Parliament’s Legislative Observatory website.⁵⁵ Table 1 shows the distribution of voting sessions by policy area. It is apparent that the most frequent areas are common foreign and security policy (2379, 13.90%), environmental policy (2119, 12.38%), budget (1927, 11.26%), social policy (1862, 10.88%), and agricultural policy (1457, 8.51%).

Figure 8



Source: Eulytix, European Parliament.

Note: The number of voting sessions is directly related to the number of procedures in each type. Hence, it is no surprise that voting sessions pertaining to INI and RSP procedures are the most frequent, as the EP may initiate these procedures on its own, whereas the number of COD procedures is controlled by the Commission.

Table 1: The number of voting sessions related to each policy area

Policy area	Number of sessions	Percentage of total
Common foreign and security policy (CFSP)	2379	13.90
Environmental policy	2119	12.38
Budget of the Union	1927	11.26
Social policy, social charter and protocol	1862	10.88
Agricultural policy and economies	1457	8.51
Public health	1137	6.64
Employment policy, action to combat unemployment	1080	6.31
Institutions of the Union	963	5.63
Energy policy	932	5.45
Relations with third countries	860	5.03
Police, judicial and customs cooperation in general	681	3.98
Transport policy in general	673	3.93
Common commercial policy in general	659	3.85
Citizen's rights	591	3.45
Consumers' protection in general	482	2.82
Industrial policy	480	2.80
Enterprise policy, inter-company cooperation	457	2.67
Fundamental rights in the EU, Charter	448	2.62
Treaties in general	426	2.49
Education, vocational training and youth	362	2.12
Enlargement of the Union	352	2.06
Regional policy	325	1.90
Free movement and integration of third-country nationals	325	1.90
Fisheries policy	276	1.61
Free movement of services, freedom to provide	272	1.59
Development cooperation	234	1.37
Monetary union	232	1.36
Emergency, food, humanitarian aid, aid to refugees, Emergency Aid Reserve	225	1.31
Free movement of goods	216	1.26
Economic growth	213	1.24
Competition	194	1.13
Free movement of capital	181	1.06
EU law	163	0.95
Taxation	148	0.86
Agenda	135	0.79
Judicial cooperation	104	0.61
Research and technological development and space	97	0.57
Cooperation between administrations	90	0.53
Economic union	78	0.46
Free movement of persons	76	0.44
Tourism	49	0.29
Free movement of workers	46	0.27
Common cultural area, cultural diversity	42	0.25
Global economy and globalisation	22	0.13
Civil protection	21	0.12
European statistical legislation	2	0.01

Source: Eulytix, European Parliament.

Note: Policy areas are determined on the procedure level. Moreover, multiple policy areas may be related to a single procedure and voting session.

Annex II: Cohesion metrics

The agreement index, or index-of-agreement (IA), which was first introduced by Stuart Rice,⁵⁶ is a simple measure of voting cohesion.⁵⁷ It measures how the difference between the number of votes belonging to the majority and minority position relate to the total number of votes cast. Its original definition was given by Rice for voting sessions with two possible choices: for or

against, hence, it is unsuitable for the case at hand. As such, this Paper used and further extended the definition given by Fulvió Attiná.⁵⁸ The agreement index used here is a measure of the relation between the four types (or modalities) of votes: for, against, abstention, or did not participate. Technically, the agreement is defined as:

$$IA = \frac{\text{highest modality} - \text{sum of the other modalities}}{\text{total number of votes}}$$

The agreement index equals one if all MEPs in the group voted the same way. As agreement within the group decreases, but at least half of the group votes in the same way, the measure falls between 1 and 0. If less than half of the group supports even the most popular voting modality, the IA is negative.

Entropy, more precisely, Shannon entropy of a random variable – such as the voting choice of an MEP belonging to a specific group – measures the uncertainty inherent to the variable’s outcomes. It was introduced by Claude Shannon (1948) and is defined as for a random variable X as:

$$H(X) = - \sum_{i=1}^N p(x_i) \log(p(x_i))$$

where $p(x_i)$ is the probability of outcome x_i . The base of the logarithm is chosen to suit the use-case. In our case it is perhaps best to choose the base to be four. This choice has the advantage of limiting the possible values of entropy to be between zero and one, since we have

four types of votes. With this definition, entropy is zero if and only if each the group was in total agreement during a voting session, while takes the maximum value, one, if and only if each vote had the same probability.⁵⁹

Annex III: Further notes on the simulations

In the simulations, the vote choice of a single MEP is modelled as a Bernoulli trial with four possible outcomes: in favour, against, abstention, or did not

participate. We assume that the probability of each outcome, for voting session j is influenced by the group that the MEP is member of:

$$\Pr(A \text{ MEP belonging to group } G \text{ cast vote } k \text{ during voting session } j) = p_k^j(G)$$

Furthermore, it is assumed that MEPs make their decision independently. Under these conditions the vote distribution of a group G during voting session j follows a multinomial distribution.

variables.⁶⁰ The resulting distribution is sometimes referred to as Poisson multinomial distribution (PMD).⁶¹

The outcome of a voting session, that is, the number of votes in each modality, is given by the sum of independent, but not identically distributed random

Now, we are interested in two quantities. Suppose the winning vote for voting session j was originally “in favour”. First, we want to know the probability that under the modified seat distribution the winning outcome is “against”. Technically we are interested in knowing:

$$\Pr(\text{against} > \text{in favour for voting session } j)$$

Then, we also want to find out the expected number of voting sessions with a different outcome.⁶²

To achieve this dual objective, we approximate the parameters of the multinomial distributions underlying the vote distribution of groups with the relative frequency of vote modalities for each voting session. Then, we generate a “random world” by drawing a random sample from these distributions (one per each group per voting session). We determine the winner’s outcome, then repeat this process many times, 10,000 in our case, while keeping a tab of the voting outcomes. An algorithmic description of the procedure is as follows:

Step 1: Determine the winning vote for the first voting session.

Step 2: Initialise the number of different-than-original outcomes to zero.

Step 3: Calculate the relative frequencies of each vote type in each faction for the first voting session.

Step 4: For each group, draw random samples from a multinomial distribution with parameters estimated in Step 3 (relative frequencies).

Step 5: Calculate the total number of votes in each modality.

Step 6: Determine the counterfactual winning vote. Either “against” or “in favour”, the highest of the two.

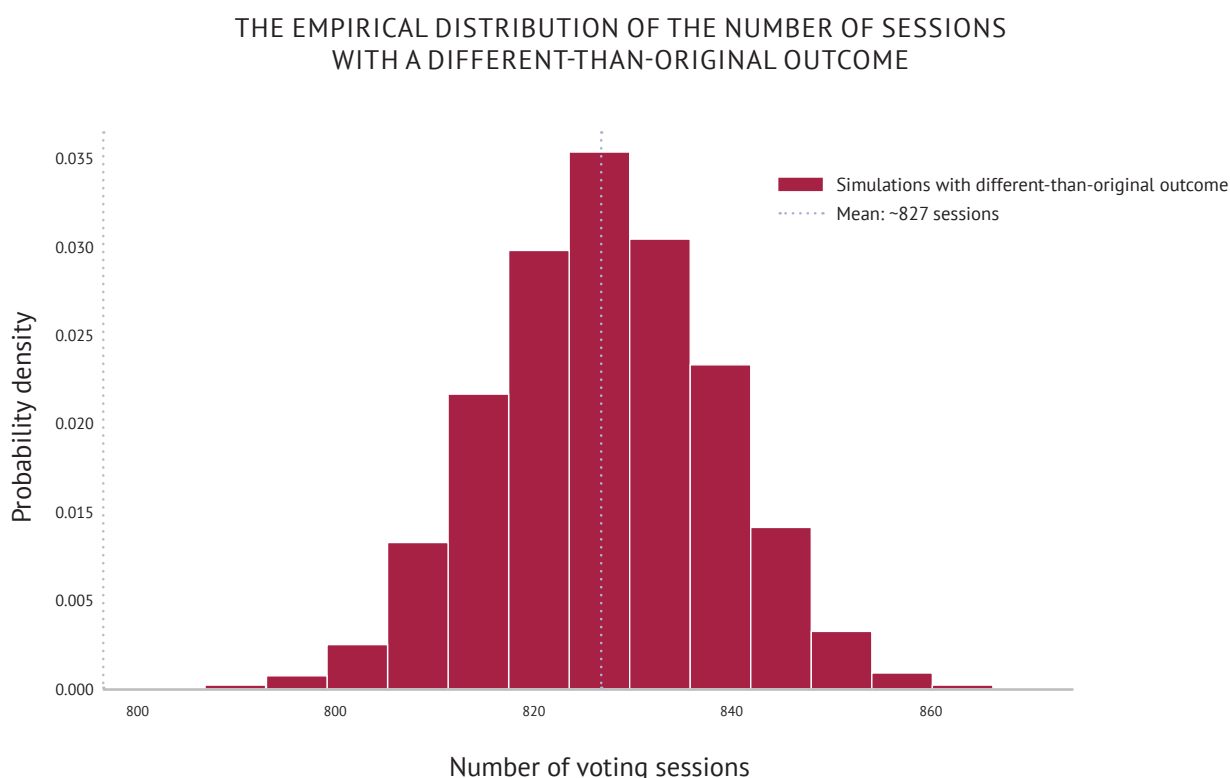
Step 7: If the counterfactual winning vote matches the original, continue, otherwise increment the number of different-than-original outcomes by one.

Step 8: Repeat Steps 1-7 for all voting sessions.

Step 9: Repeat Steps 1-8 N times.

As a result of this process, we can obtain an empirical distribution of the number of sessions with a different outcome, as illustrated by Figure 9.

Figure 9



Source: Eulytix, European Parliament.

Annex IV: Impacted sessions by policy area

Table 2: The average number and percentage of affected voting sessions by policy area

Policy area	Affected sessions	Percentage of total affected
Environmental policy	328	39.66%
Agricultural policy and economies	142	17.17%
Institutions of the Union	112	13.54%
Social policy, social charter and protocol	102	12.33%
Common foreign and security policy (CFSP)	90	10.88%
Employment policy, action to combat unemployment	78	9.43%
Citizen's rights	73	8.83%
Energy policy	71	8.59%
Budget of the Union	55	6.65%
Police, judicial and customs cooperation in general	41	4.96%
Public health	41	4.96%
Industrial policy	35	4.23%
Fisheries policy	34	4.11%
Common commercial policy in general	27	3.26%
Consumers' protection in general	27	3.26%
Transport policy in general	22	2.66%
Education, vocational training and youth	20	2.42%
Fundamental rights in the EU, Charter	19	2.30%
Relations with third countries	18	2.18%
Enterprise policy, inter-company cooperation	18	2.18%
Monetary union	18	2.18%
Development cooperation	17	2.06%
Treaties in general	15	1.81%
Competition	15	1.81%
Economic growth	15	1.81%
Free movement and integration of third-country nationals	14	1.69%
Emergency, food, humanitarian aid, aid to refugees, Emergency Aid Reserve	12	1.45%
Free movement of capital	12	1.45%
Agenda	11	1.33%
Free movement of goods	11	1.33%
Enlargement of the Union	11	1.33%
Economic union	8	0.97%
Free movement of services, freedom to provide	5	0.60%
Judicial cooperation	4	0.48%
Cooperation between administrations	3	0.36%
Regional policy	3	0.36%
EU law	3	0.36%
Free movement of workers	3	0.36%
Taxation	2	0.24%
Research and technological development and space	1	0.12%
Tourism	1	0.12%

Source: Authors' calculations.

Note: Multiple policy areas may belong to a voting session, hence the number of affected sessions does not add up to 827 – the average number of affected sessions.

Annex V: Likely failed procedures

Table 3: Procedures that would have failed with greater than 50% probability

Procedure ID	Title	Chance of failure
2019/0819(CNS)	Automated data exchange with regard to dactyloscopic data in the United Kingdom	83.54%
2019/2199(INI)	Situation of Fundamental Rights in the European Union - Annual Report for the years 2018-2019	68.38%
2020/2116(INI)	Human rights protection and the EU external migration policy	99.67%
2020/2201(INI)	Citizens' dialogues and Citizens' participation in the EU decision-making	99.87%
2020/2220(INL)	Proposal for a Council Regulation on the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, repealing Council Decision (76/787/ECSC, EEC, Euratom) and the Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage annexed to that decision	53.56%
2020/2670(RSP)	Objection pursuant to Rule 112(2) and (3): Certain uses of chromium trioxide	63.81%
2021/2146(DEC)	2020 discharge: European Border and Coast Guard Agency	94.82%
2021/2594(RSP)	Resolution on the adequate protection of personal data by the United Kingdom	100.00%
2021/2912(DEA)	Determining cases where identity data may be considered as same or similar for the purpose of the multiple identity detection pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/818	99.91%
2021/2978(RSP)	Resolution on fundamental rights and the rule of law in Slovenia, in particular the delayed nomination of EPPO prosecutors	77.67%
2022/0165(NLE)	Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States	55.42%
2022/0195(COD)	Nature restoration	100.00%

- 1 Cunningham, Kevin, Dennison, Susi, Hix, Simon and Learmonth, Imogen (2024), "A sharp right turn: A forecast for the 2024 European Parliament elections", *ECFR Policy Brief*.
- 2 In Wax, Eddy (2024), "Europe's Socialists scramble for ideas to fight far-right surge", *Politico*, the Spanish prime minister, Pedro Sánchez, was quoted warning that "the very soul of Europe is at risk" in the upcoming EP elections.
- 3 See Zuleeg, Fabian, Emmanouilidis, Janis A., Borges de Castro, Ricardo (2021), "Europe in the age of permacrisis", *EPC Commentary*.
- 4 Henley, Jon (2024), "Make or break for the EU? Europeans vote in June with far-right on the rise", *The Guardian*.
- 5 <https://www.politico.eu/europe-poll-of-polls/european-parliament-election/>.
- 6 www.eulytix.eu.
- 7 As Hamlet is quoted saying in William Shakespeare's drama with the same name: "The time is out of joint; O cursed spite! That ever I was born to set it right."
- 8 See, for example, Norris, Pippa and Gromping, Max (2017), "Populist threats to electoral integrity: the year in elections, 2016-2017", p. 24.
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