



DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES
POLICY DEPARTMENT
CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS



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**The Selection of Candidates for
the European Parliament by
National Parties and the Impact
of European Political Parties**

STUDY

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DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES
POLICY DEPARTMENT C: CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND
CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

The Selection of Candidates for the European Parliament by National Parties and the Impact of European Political Parties

STUDY

Abstract

This study compares the procedures applied by national political parties when they select their candidates for the European elections. It analyses the background in national law, the formal party statutes and the informal processes preparing the final selection. The report covers the calendar, selection criteria and structural characteristics of candidate nomination in the major political parties of the Member States, including the impact of European political parties.

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PREFACE

Well before the beginning of the electoral campaign for the 2009 European elections the Committee on Constitutional Affairs decided to take a look at the norms and practices applicable for selecting MEP candidates in the Member States. The committee has for years been working on issues related to electoral procedure and intends to continue this work during this parliamentary term. In an internal study drawn up a few months before the elections the current state of affairs with respect to national legislation on the European elections was analysed.¹ The document presented here complements this study through a more detailed description and evaluation of the practical steps taken by national political parties to arrive at their final candidate lists for the European elections. Where necessary important legal provisions from the above-mentioned study are reproduced here to facilitate the use of this document.

Over the last decade the democratic deficit of the European Union has become the object of a steady flow of political and academic commentary. In the context of the Convention on the Future of Europe and the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, but also during the arduous ratification of the Lisbon Treaty and the 2009 electoral campaign, many arguments were advanced in favour or against the constitutionalisation and politicisation of the European Union. One result of this wide debate is an increasing awareness of the *problématique* created by a polymorphic electoral system combining a few quite general European provisions with extensive and meticulous national legislation. Many observers of the European Union are today more convinced than ever that one of the major brakes for further European political integration is the fact that the locus of power remains in many ways with national parties. Each European election since 1979, and the last one was no exception, gave numerous illustrations of the interference of national political leadership with the organisation of European party and parliamentary group structures, and with their policy-making.

In this context, one important aspect is the selection of MEP candidates by national parties. The goal of this document is thus to provide detailed information on the complicated interaction between the Member States and the EU in forming the only directly elected institution of the European Union.² It is of course hoped that this knowledge will make it clearer for observers and actors alike that without further reform of the European political party system and the regulations governing the European elections any prospect for effective political integration seems unrealistic.

The book was compiled on the basis of individual country reports delivered by specialised research groups in most Member States (see list of authors). Some editing was carried out to produce a coherent presentation, hopefully without changing the quality of the original texts. The editor would like to express his gratitude for the cooperative spirit and reliability of all contributors.

Wilhelm Lehmann

¹ Wilhelm Lehmann, **The European Elections: EU Legislation, National Provisions and Civic Participation**; Internal Study, Policy Department *Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs*, March 2009, PE 410.672.

² An executive summary of the study was published in March 2009 (PE 410.684).

BELGIUM

This chapter describes and analyses current rules and practices for the selection of candidates for the European Parliament elections of 7 June 2009. This will be done in three stages.

First we will describe the legal framework for eligibility criteria and candidate presentation criteria. The electoral system for European elections will also be explained. Secondly, we will present the rules for drawing up candidate lists, adopted by the parties in their statutes. There is, however, still divergence between what the rules say and what actually happens. We will therefore also describe the mechanisms actually used by Belgian political parties to select candidates. Finally, having looked at the way the candidates standing for election to the European Parliament are chosen in Belgium in 2009, the fourth part of this study will examine the consequences of these rules. In particular, we will see what impact they have on who is chosen.

Legal rules

To understand how candidate selection for the European Parliament works, we first need to look at the legal framework governing the way the elections are run in Belgium. Two types of regulations need to be examined in particular: those concerning the right to stand for election, or eligibility, and those concerning the way those elected are chosen, or the voting system.

Article 41 of the *Law of 23 March 1989 on the election of the European Parliament* lays down the eligibility criteria for European elections. There are five conditions to be fulfilled. To be eligible, a candidate must:

- be Belgian or a national of another EU Member State,
- be domiciled in one of the EU Member States,
- be 21 or over,
- not have had his or her civil or political rights taken away in Belgium or his or her Member State of origin,
- not be a candidate for the same election in another Member State.

In addition, there is a provision regarding the college in which the person wishes to stand as a candidate. In Belgium, the European elections are organised into three colleges based on language: the German-speaking electoral college is for voters from the nine communes in Belgium's German-speaking community; the French electoral college is for voters from the Walloon Region and voters from the Bruxelles-Hal-Vilvorde constituency who want to vote for a French-speaking party; and the Flemish electoral college covers the Flemish Region and voters in Brussels who want to vote for a Flemish-speaking party. The elections are therefore divided along linguistic lines. This principle applies both for voters and for candidates. Article 41(3) of the *Law of 23 March 1989 on the election of the European Parliament* stipulates that the electoral college to which candidates belong must reflect their linguistic affiliation. French-speaking candidates must stand for election within the French electoral college, Flemish-speaking candidates within the Flemish-speaking college and German-speaking candidates within the German-speaking college. It is worth mentioning that this choice, which is also incumbent upon nationals from other Member States, has nothing to do with permanent linguistic identity. Nor is any check made on a candidate's linguistic ability. Anyone wishing to stand for election within the Flemish-speaking electoral college is assumed to speak Flemish, just as anyone choosing to stand within the French electoral college is assumed to speak French. In practice, candidates

simply choose the constituency in which they want to stand. They are allowed to make this decision at their own discretion, and are not constrained by where they live. Consequently, a citizen living in the Walloon Region, which is French-speaking, may choose to stand as part of the Flemish-speaking electoral college. This confirms the linguistic rather than solely territorial nature of the electoral colleges.

In addition to these eligibility conditions, there are also various functions that are incompatible with the status of MEP, and these are listed in Article 42 of the *Law of 23 March 1989 on the election of the European Parliament*. These measures do not prevent people from standing for election, but if they are elected, they must choose between their old and new posts. The post of MEP is incompatible with holding a seat in the Federal Parliament (House of Representatives or Senate) or on any of the assemblies of the federal bodies (Flemish Parliament, Parliament of the French Community, Walloon Parliament, Parliament of Brussels-Capital Region, Parliament of the German-speaking Community), with participation in government at either federal or regional level, with a post as permanent deputy (provincial executive) and with the post of 'bourgstmestre' (burgomaster), 'échevin' (alderman) or president of the Public Social Action Council (communal executive). In other words, there are very few political posts that can be held alongside that of Member of the European Parliament. At most a person can simultaneously be a Member of the European Parliament and a municipal or provincial councillor.

To complete this overview of the legal rules governing standing for election to the European Parliament, two areas still need to be looked at: the voting system and the rules for submitting one's candidacy.

Regarding the voting system, there are five points worthy of particular mention.

The first is that Belgian representatives are elected to the European Parliament using a party-list (D'Hondt) proportional representation system. The second is that, as already explained, the election is organised in three electoral colleges³. In 2009 the Flemish-speaking electoral college will send fourteen representatives to the European Parliament, the French-speaking electoral college nine and the German-speaking electoral college just one. In passing, note the singular nature of a so-called proportional system with just one seat to be allocated.

The third point is that once the seats have been allocated to the different lists, MEPs are elected using a semi-open list system⁴. Voters can either vote for a list as a whole (by putting a cross in the list heading box) or vote preferentially for as many candidates as they want from the list of their choice (see Figure 1). Voting for a list means that the voter agrees with the candidate presentation order set by the party. Preferential voting means that the voter wants to change this order by expressing support for particular candidates. Both types of voting are used to choose who will be elected from the lists. When the votes are counted, the candidates' score is the number of preferential votes they attracted. The eligibility figure then has to be calculated. This is the score needed in order to be elected: it is the number of votes for the list divided by the number of seats to which the list is entitled plus one. For candidates in the top places on the list, the *common pot* of votes for the list as a whole is divided by two before being added to their preferential votes, to bring them to the eligibility figure, and therefore to election. Once the *common pot* is empty, only the preferential votes count. This semi-open system therefore tries to

³ Article 9 of the Law of 23 March 1989 on the election of the European Parliament.

⁴ David M. Farrell, *Electoral Systems, a Comparative Introduction*, New York, Palgrave, 2001. John. M. Carey and Matthew S. Shugart, 'Incentives To Cultivate a Personal Vote: a Rank Ordering of Electoral Formulas', in *Electoral Studies*, vol.14, no 4, 1995, pp. 417-439.

achieve a balance between the designation of elected representatives by the parties and by voters⁵.

Figure 1: Sample ballot paper for elections in Belgium

The fourth point to mention about this voting system is how MEPs who resign during their term of office are replaced. To avoid having to run by-elections, Belgian law stipulates that substitutes will also be chosen on election day. In practice, this means that the candidate lists are split between 'actual' candidates in the running for direct election – and there can only be as many of these on a list as there are seats allocated to the electoral college – and 'substitute' candidates, who are ranked following the election according to the number of preferential votes they won and the devolution of list votes. Their rank determines the order in which they will replace resigning MEPs (see Figure 1). There must be a minimum of six substitute candidates and a maximum of half the total number of seats to be filled plus one⁶.

⁵ For more information about this, see Jean-Benoit Pilet, *Changer pour gagner? Les réformes électorales en Belgique*, Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, Brussels, 2007.

⁶ Article 117 of the Electoral Code

Finally, it is very important to point out that Belgian electoral legislation has required parity between men and women on candidate lists since the early 2000s. This is required both for actual candidates and for substitute candidates. For each of these two categories, the law requires as many male candidates as female candidates where there is an even number of places on the list. If there is an odd number of places, the maximum difference between the number of men and the number of women must be one⁷. Furthermore, the first two places on the list may not be occupied by candidates of the same gender. Failure to abide by these rules on parity renders the candidate list invalid.

Members of the public may, with these rules in mind, meet to draw up a list of candidates and stand in the European elections. They have to submit their list to the president of the main electoral office of the electoral college within which they want their list to be presented to the electorate. The list must be submitted on the 58th and 57th days before the election⁸, i.e. on Friday 10 April and Saturday 11 April for the 2009 European elections. A list is valid if it meets the legal requirements listed above and if it can be proven that it has the support of a certain number of citizens or MEPs. Article 21(1) of the *Law of 23 March 1989 on the election of the European Parliament* stipulates that the list submission document must be signed by:

- at least five Belgian MEPs from the corresponding language group for the electoral college in which the list is to be presented,
- or at least 5 000 voters living in the communes covered by the electoral college or living in another EU Member State (200 for the German-speaking electoral college).

The list submission document must state the surname, first name, date of birth, sex, occupation and principal address of residence of each of the candidates. The order in which the candidates are presented in this document indicates the order in which the party wishes them to appear on the ballot paper.

The parties' candidate selection rules

Aside from the legal framework for the voting system, eligibility criteria and the procedures for submitting and registering candidacies, the process by which members of the public stand as candidates in European elections in Belgium is primarily governed by the political parties.

Most of them stipulate in their statutes how lists shall be drawn up for the different elections. In this report, we will look only at parties currently represented in the Federal Parliament. We will therefore cover: the CD&V, the Open VLD, the SP.a, Vlaams Belang, Lijst Dedecker, Groen, the N-VA, the SLP, the MR, the PS, the CDH, Ecolo and the FN (see Appendix 1). All obtained at least 2% of the vote in the latest election of a new Federal Parliament, held on 10 June 2007.

Traditionally, studies of the political parties' candidate selection systems raise two questions: at what level within the party are the lists for the European elections drawn up (centrally, or at constituency level)? And who within the party is responsible for this task (the leader, the bureau, or the members' assembly)⁹?

⁷ Article 21a of the Law of 23 March 1989 on the election of the European Parliament.

⁸ Article 19 of the Law of 23 March 1989 on the election of the European Parliament.

⁹ Reuven Hazan, 'Candidate Selection', Lawrence Leduc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds.), *Comparing Democracies 2. New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. Sage, London, 2002, pp. 108-126. Gideon Rahat and Reuven Hazan, 'Candidate Selection Methods: An Analytical Framework', *Party Politics*, vol. 7, no 3, 2001, pp. 297-322.

To the first of these questions, the answer is the same for all the parties considered. It is the parties' central authorities that are responsible for drawing up the lists for the European elections. The Belgian party system is split into Flemish-speaking parties and French-speaking parties. The former cover the Flemish region and Brussels, and the latter the Walloon region, Brussels and environs. The electoral colleges for the European elections correspond to these two geographical areas. It is therefore logical for the choice of candidates for European elections to be made at central party level. The only exception is the selection of candidates for the German-speaking college. This covers a small area at the far east of the Walloon region. Here the drawing up of lists is managed by the German-speaking branches of French-speaking parties, namely the PFF (*Partei für Freiheit und Fortschritt*) for the MR, the SP (*Sozialistische Partei*) for the PS, the CSP (*Christlich Soziale Partei*) for the CDH and the *Ost-Belgien* federation of Ecolo.

As regards the second question on the other hand, the statutory rules vary from one party to another (see Table 1). Four groups of parties can be identified. The first group is made up of the green parties and to a lesser extent Open VLD. The statutes of these parties stipulate that candidate selection is the prerogative of the members. More specifically, the members are allowed to vote on the allocation of the most important places on the list without preselection being carried out by anyone else within the party (the leader, bureau or council). It is therefore an open election in which any party member may stand and potentially be chosen as a candidate. This vote chooses the candidate at the top of the list for Open VLD and the top places on the actual and substitute lists for the green parties (Ecolo and Groen).

CD&V	The list of candidates is proposed by the party's General Council (<i>Algemeen Vergadering</i> - Article 63.4 of the statutes) and approved by vote of the members' assembly, or <i>poll</i> (Article 65 of the statutes).
Open VLD	The top candidate on the list is selected by universal suffrage of the members. The rest of the list is proposed by the party bureau (<i>Partijbestuur</i> - Article 16 of the statutes) and then approved by a vote by the members.
SP.a	The statutes stipulate only that the list of candidates be approved by the party members at the party conference (Article 15 of the statutes). The statutes leave the party leaders free to draw up the list of candidates to be proposed to the conference.
Vlaams Belang	There is nothing in the statutes that governs the drawing up of lists.
Lijst Dedecker	The statutes leave the party bureau (<i>partijbestuur</i> – Article 8.3) free to manage candidate selection as it sees fit.
Groen	The candidates in the first two places, in the last place and in the first two places on the substitutes list are chosen by a members' assembly (<i>poll</i>). The complete list must be endorsed by the party bureau (<i>partijbestuur</i>).
N-VA	The list is drawn up by the party bureau (<i>partijbestuur</i>). It is then submitted for approval to the party council (<i>partijraad</i> – Article 6.26 of the statutes) composed of members' representatives, party representatives and the party leaders.
SLP	The statutes talk about a 'model list' but without stating who is to draw it up (Article 7.1.2 of the statutes). This is put to the vote in the members' assembly. The members may vote on each place or for the list as a whole (Article 7.1.3 of the statutes).
MR	The statutes stipulate only that the party's electoral committee must make sure all components of the party (liberals, FDF and MCC) are fairly represented when drawing up the candidate lists (Article 26(1) of the statutes).
PS	The party conference (consisting of members' representatives) decides the order of presentation of the candidates, based on a proposal by the party bureau (Article 30(2) of the statutes).
CDH	A list of candidates is drawn up by the political bureau and ratified by a members' conference (Article 111 of the statutes).
Ecolo	The prominent places (places at the top and bottom of the list and first substitutes) are allocated by a vote at the members' general assembly (Article 139 of the statutes). The other places are allocated by the federation council.
FN	There is nothing in the statutes that governs the drawing up of lists.

Table 1: Statutory rules of the Belgian parties regarding candidate selection

These are the most coveted positions on the list because they benefit from the devolution of the votes in the list heading box. Without the benefit of these transfers it is very difficult to get elected, particularly when the party has won only a few seats. In the European elections, with nine seats for the French-speaking electoral college and 14 for the Flemish-speaking electoral

college, the number elected per party tends to vary between one and four. Votes in the box at the top of the list are therefore crucial. In 2004, only three of the 25 seats were won by candidates who were not at the top of their list. This election was no exception: between 1945 and 1991, only 23 of the 3 382 members of the House of Representatives were elected outside their order of presentation¹⁰. The other coveted places are the places at the bottom of the list and the first substitute positions¹¹. Those who are last on the list obviously do not benefit from the votes in the list heading box, but the position is more visible and therefore more easily identifiable by voters, and it tends to attract more votes¹². In 2004, the three members elected to the European Parliament who were not at the top of their list were all in last place among the actual candidates. Finally, the top positions among the substitute candidates are also highly prized. It is not unusual for those elected to include political heavyweights, ministers or party chairmen, who are bringing their popularity to the list for the European elections but have no intention of sitting in Strasbourg. As soon as they are elected they resign, allowing one of the substitutes to replace them. In 2004, this was the case with the Prime Minister, Guy Verhofstadt, who headed the VLD list but had no intention of giving up the leadership of the federal government to become an MEP. In total, seven of the 25 MEPs elected on 13 June 2004 resigned immediately from the seats to which they had just been elected.

Alongside the parties that give their members direct power to select candidates, there is a second group of parties – the largest group – that draws up lists in two stages for European elections. A draft list is drawn up by a small body within the party. This ‘model list’ is then submitted to the members for approval, at a party assembly, *poll* or conference. This system is laid down by the statutes of the CD&V, Open VLD (except for the person at the top of the list), the SP.a, the SLP and the CDH. The body responsible for drawing up the draft list varies from one group to another. In the CDH and OpenVLD, the statutes allocate this task to the party bureau, which is composed of the party leaders (leader and deputy leader, members of parliament, ministers and federation presidents). In the CD&V, the *Algemeen vergadering* is responsible for this task. This body is composed of the party leadership, some members of parliament and local representatives, members’ delegates and co-opted members. Finally, in the SP.a and the SLP, the statutes are silent on this matter, leaving the party authorities to do as they please. This system for drawing up lists in two stages, giving the last word to members, has been the most common system among Belgian parties since the 1960s¹³.

The third group of parties consists of the PS and N-VA. Both also work in two stages. A small body is first given the job of drawing up a draft list, a ‘model list’. In both cases, this task is given to the party bureau. Next, in a departure from the system used by parties in the second group, this ‘model list’ is not approved by the members but by a body consisting of the party leadership, members of parliament, local representatives and members’ delegates (the conference of the PS and the *partijraad* of the N-VA). Finally, the statutes of some parties do not include rules to be followed when drawing up lists. The bodies within the party are given complete freedom to decide the procedure for each election. This is the case for the MR, Lijst

¹⁰Wilfried Dewachter, ‘Elections, partis politiques et représentants. La quête d’une légitimité démocratique 1919-2002’, Eliane Gubin, Jean-Pierre Nandrin, Emmanuel Gerard and Els Witte (eds), *Histoire de la Chambre des représentants en Belgique*, Brussels, House of Representatives, 2003, p. 74.

¹¹Lieven De Winter, ‘Belgium: Democracy or Oligarchy?’, Michael Gallagher and Michael Marsh, *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective: The Secret Garden of Politics*, London, Sage, 1988, pp. 20-46.

¹²Bart Maddens, Bram Wauters, Jo Noppe and Stefaan Fiers, ‘Effects of Campaign Spending in an Open List PR System: The 2003 Legislative Elections in Flanders/Belgium’, *West European Politics*, vol. 29, no 1, 2006, pp. 161-8.

¹³Lieven De Winter, ‘Twintig jaar polls of de teloorgang van een vorm van interne partijdemocratie’, *Res Publica*, vol. 22, no 4, 1980, pp. 563-585. James Obler, ‘Intraparty Democracy and the Selection of Parliamentary Candidates: The Belgian Case’, *British Journal of Political Science*, vol. 4, no 2, 1970, pp. 163-85.

Dedecker, Vlaams Belang and Front national. This last group of political parties confirms the need to look beyond the rules contained in party statutes. How lists are drawn up for the European elections cannot be fully understood without looking at what the political parties do in practice and analysing how they actually apply the rules in their statutes, or whether they apply them at all.

To begin with, observation of practices for drawing up lists reveals how candidate selection operates in parties whose statutes are silent on the subject. In the MR and Lijst Dedecker, it appears that practices are very similar to those in parties that draw up lists in two stages, which is the case in most other parties. A model list is prepared by the party leadership. This is submitted for approval by the members meeting in the assembly. In Vlaams Belang and Front national, however, the system for drawing up lists is different. Both parties remain very centralised, and lists are drawn up by the leadership oligarchy, namely the party leader and party figureheads. Transparency is not the rule and is not even attempted. Members are not consulted, just as they are not consulted when the party leader is chosen¹⁴.

Apart from these four specific cases, three general trends are worth highlighting regarding the practices of Belgian political parties when it comes to candidate selection processes. Firstly, while the statutes of most of the parties do not grant any specific powers to the party leader, he (or she) is unquestionably the leading light in choosing candidates for the European Parliament. Because the election is organised in electoral colleges covering the whole of the electorate to which the French-speaking and Flemish-speaking parties are appealing for votes, the lists often contain the names of the most prominent figures within the party, even when these people have no intention of sitting in the European Parliament if elected. To produce the most populist list possible and convince party heavyweights to take part in the campaign, it is generally the party leader who wields the stick, far more than the party bureau or council.

The second point to be made as regards candidate selection practices is that, in this task, the party leader is generally surrounded by party figureheads, whether these are ministers or group leaders in the parliament, or former leaders brought into their political group as advisers¹⁵. The drawing up of the ‘model list’ is therefore mainly managed and endorsed by a leadership oligarchy not formally recognised by the statutes. It is also common for parties to set up an advisory panel to draw up the model list. This informal committee brings together former leaders who no longer wish to stand as candidates and who are not therefore both choosing and being chosen.

Thirdly, the members play a less significant role in practice than the statutes would suggest. The statutes set the members up as the final arbiters with the power to give final approval to the ‘model list’ and allow them to vote on the allocation of each of the places on the list should they reject the model list. However, in practice it is extremely rare for the members to reject the draft list submitted to them, just as it is becoming increasingly rare for members to reject or amend the manifesto, though this is formally submitted for their approval at the conference.

Among the green parties, the members still have more weight. They really are the ones who decide, by means of a vote, which candidates will head up the list. The recent selection of the candidate for the top of the Ecolo list in the European elections was another example of this. The

¹⁴ It should nevertheless be pointed out that last year Vlaams Belang formally switched to electing its leader by universal suffrage of members, but only one candidate was in the running.

¹⁵ Pascal Delwit, Benoit Hellings, Jean-Benoit Pilet and Emilie van Haute, ‘Le profil des candidats francophones aux élections fédérales du 18 mai 2003’, *Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*, no 1874-1875, 2005, pp. 1-69.

party's co-leader, Isabelle Durant, had great difficulty in being selected, having to see off an activist with a lower media profile, Philippe Lamberts, who had nevertheless attracted nearly half of the votes at the general assembly responsible for candidate selection. Even among the green parties, however, members' margin for manoeuvre is curtailed to some extent as leaders become more adept at controlling them.

Who are the Belgian candidates and MEPs?

Having looked at the rules set out in legislation and the party statutes and described actual practices of preparing lists of candidates in Belgium for the European Parliament, the third and last part of this report will examine the effects of these rules and practices. The comparative studies by Rahat and Hazan explained how candidate profile, and therefore MEP profile, will vary according to the candidate selection method used within a party¹⁶. Their research shows that the more decision-making power the members have, the more they will participate. However, members seem to be less able to draw up diversified lists than the party leadership of the parties. Outgoing elected representatives and popular figures appeal to them more than less well-known candidates from politically marginalised groups (women, young people, elderly people, people from different ethnic origins). It is very interesting to look at who is chosen to stand for the European elections in Belgium in the light of Rahat and Hazan's findings.

Top-of-list candidates announced for the 2009 European elections

The candidate lists for the European elections on 7 June 2009 were not yet known; they will be published in April. However, most of the names set to feature at the top of the lists have already been officially announced by the parties (see following table).

Party	Announced top-of-list candidate	Current office
CD&V	Jean-Luc Dehaene	MEP (former prime minister)
Open VLD	Guy Verhofstadt	Not in office (former prime minister)
SP.a	Kathleen Van Brempt	Flemish regional minister
Vlaams Belang	Frank Van Hecke	MEP (former party leader)
Lijst Dedecker	Derk Jan Eppink	Dutch journalist
Groen	Bart Staes	MEP
N-VA	Frieda Brepoels	MEP
SLP	Nelly Maes	MEP
MR	Louis Michel	European Commissioner (former party leader and deputy prime minister)
PS	Jean-Claude Marcourt	Walloon regional minister
CDH	Anne Delvaux	Senator
Ecolo	Isabelle Durant	Senator and party co-leader
FN	Daniel Huygens	Walloon regional deputy and party leader

The table suggests that the European election will be a competition between two types of top-of-list candidate. On one side, particularly in the Flemish region, it will be outgoing MEPs leading their parties into battle. This is the case for the CD&V, Vlaams Belang, the SLP, the N-VA and Groen. On the French-speaking side on the other hand, the top-of-list candidates are people who did not sit at Strasbourg during the last parliamentary term. Two French-speaking parties will

¹⁶ Reuven Hazan and Gideon Rahat, 'The Influence of Candidate Selection Methods on Legislatures and Legislators: Theoretical Propositions, Methodological Suggestions and Empirical Evidence', *Journal of Legislative Studies*, Vol. 12, No 3-4, 2006, pp. 366-385.

be led during the campaign by their highest-ranking leaders: the (co)leaders of both Ecolo and FN are at the top of their lists. For the MR, former party leader and European Commissioner Louis Michel will be leading his party into the election. For the CDH, it will be senator Anne Delvaux leading the campaign. It should also be pointed out that two members of executives are at the top of their lists: Jean-Claude Marcourt, a Walloon regional minister, and Kathleen Van Brempt, a Flemish regional minister. Mrs Van Brempt will be supported by another Flemish regional minister, Bert Anciaux, at the bottom of the SP.a list. Open VLD has a similar arrangement, with former federal prime minister Guy Verhofstadt as its figurehead. Finally, Lijst Dedecker stands out from all the other political parties in that it will be led during the European election campaign by someone from outside the Belgian political establishment, in two respects. Derk Jan Eppink is both a journalist and a national of the Netherlands.

In addition to looking at the candidates at the top of the lists, we should also try to establish whether there are any links between the way candidates are selected by a party and the profile of the candidates announced so far for the election on 7 June 2009. Obviously no firm conclusions can be drawn with only 12 top-of-list candidates currently known. Furthermore, no clear link seems to be emerging at this stage between a party's rules for drawing up lists and the choice of candidate in the top position on the list. The lesser known top-of-list candidates such as Bart Staes, Frieda Brepoels and Nelly Maes come both from parties like Groen where members control candidate selection and from parties where the decision is in the hands of the leadership (N-VA and SLP). Similarly, the parties that chose high profile personalities like Jean-Luc Dehaene, Guy Verhofstadt, Isabelle Durant, Louis Michel and Frank Van Hecke operate by giving their members genuine power (Ecolo and to a lesser extent Open VLD), little influence (CD&V, MR) or no say at all (Vlaams Belang).

There is one issue that ought to be raised, however. Do the announced top-of-list candidates really intend to sit at the European Parliament if they are elected on 7 June 2009? For some, particularly the outgoing MEPs, there is little doubt about their intention of being at Strasbourg, but for others, the situation is more ambiguous. Louis Michel has already declared on several occasions that he intends to return to an active role on the national political scene. Will Kathleen Van Brempt not want to sign up for the Flemish government again? And what about Jean-Claude Marcourt if the PS stays at the head of the Walloon regional executive after 7 June 2009? These are legitimate questions: as mentioned earlier, in 2004, seven of the 25 Belgian elected representatives resigned and let their substitutes take up their seats at the European Parliament.

Candidates in the 2004 European elections

The most reliable method of building up a more comprehensive picture of the impact of party candidate selection rules on the profile of those appearing on the lists for European Parliament elections is to look at the last election, held on 10 June 2004.

As many studies of political recruitment have shown, as a general rule the profile of candidates in elections within consolidated democracies is very different from the profile of the rest of the population. Candidates are usually men, not women, and they tend to come from the more affluent socioprofessional categories, hold a university or higher education degree, be aged over 40 and live in an urban area. As Pippa Norris explains, this sociological bias is the result of reconciling the supply of members of the public prepared to commit themselves to politics with the demand from parties seeking a certain candidate profile to represent them during a

campaign and, as necessary, within an elected assembly¹⁷. Much of the bias already exists in the candidacy applications. Not all members of the public or categories of the population are equally likely to go into politics. The political parties often reinforce the bias through their preference for the type of candidates they wish to recruit.

An analysis of Belgian candidates for the European election on 10 June 2004 confirms this sociological bias. We could mention, by way of an example, the overwhelming presence of people in their forties and fifties and the almost complete absence of much younger or older candidates from the lists¹⁸. Among French-speaking candidates, only 6.7% were aged under 30 and just 10.7% were aged 65 or over. Similarly, the economically inactive (housewives and house husbands, pensioners, students and the unemployed) only occupied 9.5% of all places on the lists of candidates. Meanwhile, manual workers were totally absent. Finally, the most heavily populated urban areas were over-represented by far. 49.3% of candidates were resident in municipalities with a population of more than 60 000, even though only 27.5% of the population lives in these towns and cities.

If the analysis is restricted only to candidates in positions on the list where they are likely to get elected¹⁹, the differences compared with the population average are even more marked²⁰. The parity law that requires the alternation of men and women in the top positions on lists means a percentage of nearly 50% women is achieved in the positions likely to be elected. In terms of age, the figures are also close to the population average, with an average age of 46.3 years among candidates in the positions most likely to be elected. However, dispersion on either side of this average is low. The youngest (under 30) and the eldest (65 and over) are almost completely absent from positions at the top of lists. For everything else, the same sociological bias as for all the candidates can be seen. Professionally, nearly half are professional politicians (43.5%) and the others are either managers (26.6%) or public service employees (including teachers, at 11.4%). The mass presence of political establishment figures is bolstered by the fact that more than a third of candidates in the positions most likely to get elected are local elected representatives (36.2%) and a slightly lower percentage hold political office at federal, regional or European level (33%).

However, what we are interested in in this report is the potential impact of party rules for drawing up lists on the sociodemographic profile of candidates in elections. In particular, what we want to see is whether, as Hazan and Rahat state²¹, more democratic candidate selection methods granting real prerogatives to members lead to less sociologically diverse lists being drawn up. To check this out, we are going to test three particular things. The first is the proportion of European, regional and national elected representatives on the list out of the total available to the party²². Then we will look at the share of list positions occupied by local elected

¹⁷ Pippa Norris (ed.), *Passages to Power. Legislative Recruitment in Advanced Democracies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997.

¹⁸ For detailed data, see Pascal Delwit, Benoit Hellings, Jean-Benoit Pilet and Emilie van Haute, 'Le profil des candidats francophones aux élections régionales et européennes du 13 juin 2004', *Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*, No 1880-1881, 2005, pp. 1-65.

Stefaan Fiers, Jo Noppe, Sam Depauw and Liselotte Libbrecht, *Het profiel van de kandidaten op de lijsten bij de Vlaamse, Europese en Brusselse verkiezingen van 13 juni 2004*, KU Leuven, 2004.

¹⁹ We are talking about the number of positions at the top of the list for which seats were won by the party at the previous election.

²⁰ Sam Depauw and Steven Van Hecke, *Het profiel van de kandidaten op de lijsten bij de Europese verkiezingen van 10 en 13 juni 2004 in de Benelux*, KU Leuven, 2004.

²¹ Reuven Hazan and Gideon Rahat, *op. cit.*

²² We thought it would be of greater interest to look at what proportion of all its elected representatives a party puts

representatives in 2004²³. Finally, we will look at the proportion of candidates aged under 30. Each time, the idea is that, in accordance with what Hazan and Rahat say, members are more inclined to select candidates they know, and therefore those who are already active in politics and have been for some years. Conversely, if the lists are drawn up by the party leadership, they will seek a more comprehensive balance by bringing in newcomers and younger people.

These hypotheses will be checked by splitting the parties into three groups:

- those where the members dominate: Ecolo and Groen (group 1),
- those where the members play a subsidiary role: Open VLD, CD&V, CDH and SP.a (group 2),
- those where the members have no direct say: Vlaams Belang, Lijst Dedecker, MR and PS (group 3).

		% of national, regional and European elected representatives	% of local elected representatives	% of under 30s
Group 1	Ecolo	75.5	41.4	8.9
	Groen	69.2	30.2	16.6
Group 2	VLD	67.2	53.6	12.8
	CD&V	49.2	60.0	14.3
	CDH	67.4	45.1	15.1
	SP.a	85.5	44.9	15.1
Group 3	Vlaams Belang	76.0	41.5	10.2
	PS	62.2	58.3	5.6
	MR	66.6	69.5	9.3

Table 2: Relationship between party candidate selection rules and candidate profiles

Clearly, from a reading of Table 3, it seems that it is not possible to establish a linear relationship between the method of drawing up lists and the candidate profile. The parties in which members have a greater say are not the ones with the least diversified lists. Ecolo and Groen do indeed recruit massively from their European, federal and regional elected representatives and those in local office, and have few people under 30 among their candidates. However, their percentages for these three indicators are similar to those of the other parties. The PS has even fewer candidates born after 1974, yet its candidates are selected without its members having any direct say. Similarly, there are far more people holding local office on the MR lists, and European, federal and regional elected representatives are fielded most by the SP.a. In the end, we can conclude that party candidate selection rules have a limited impact. Whether more power is given to members or to a small elite does not seem radically to affect the identity of candidates.

on its lists than to see what proportion of all the places on a list a party allocates to its European, national and regional elected representatives. A party fielding two candidates who are currently elected representatives will give the impression of using few elected representatives, though in fact it may be fielding all of them if it has only two elected representatives in total.

²³ For this second indicator, because all the parties have hundreds of local elected representatives, we thought it would be more useful to see what proportion of all the places on a list were allocated to them and not what proportion of all the party's local elected representatives were on the lists in 2004.

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Appendix 1: List of Belgian parties with at least one elected representative in a federal or regional/community assembly

Party	Full name	Share of votes in the House of Representatives in 2007
CD&V	Christen-democratisch en Vlaams	18.5% ²⁴
Open VLD	Open Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten	11.8%
SP.a	Socialisten en progressieven anders	10.3% ²⁵
Vlaams Belang		12.0%
Lijst Dedecker		4.0%
Groen		4.0%
N-VA	Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie	
SLP	Sociaal-Liberale Partij	
MR	Mouvement réformateur	12.5%
PS	Parti socialiste	10.9%
CDH	Centre démocrate humaniste	6.1%
Ecolo	Ecologistes confédérés pour des luttes originales	5.1%
FN	Front national	2.0%

²⁴ In a coalition with the N-VA.

²⁵ In a coalition with Spirit, which became the SLP.

BULGARIA

Introduction

The Republic of Bulgaria joined the European Union on January 1st, 2007 completing an accession process, which began with the start of entry negotiations back in the year 2000. The country signed its accession treaty in May 2005 with subsequent member state ratifications permitting the country to join the organization on the envisaged date. In line with its contractual responsibilities, the country began fulfilling obligations as an EU member state in the various institutions of the organization. In August 2005, the Parliament of Bulgaria appointed 18 European Parliament (EP) observers from amongst its members and in accordance with the results of the last national election held in 2005. In the same vain in December 2006 the Bulgarian National Parliament voted 18 of its MPs to act temporarily as Members of the European Parliament, approving at least 4 replacements proposed by three parties (DSB, UDF, BSP) for different reasons. The appointed "temporary" MEPs were to perform their duties between January 1 and May 20, 2007, when the European elections (popular vote) were due to be held. The elections were just narrowly won by a new political party, Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (CEDB) with four parties gaining representation in the EP and further two gaining over 4% of the vote.

As shown in the Table below, the **overall result** was a substantial gain for the opposition parties, and a shift in the balance within the governing coalition. The **major losers** were the traditional right parties, and the NMSS, who have had full governing mandate, with their leaders serving as Prime Ministers. The major winners were CEDB, a brand new party, based on the personal charisma of the Sofia Mayor Boiko Borisov, and the radical protest party 'Attack'.

National Parliament 2005 election results		Bulgarian parties	Bulgarian MEPs before May 2007		Bulgarian MEPs after May 2007		Political groups in the EP
Government (169)	82	BSP	6		5		PES
	53	NMSS	4	7	1	5	ALDE
	34	MRF	3		4		
Opposition (71)	20	UDF	2	4	-	5	EPP/ ED
	17	DSB	1		-		
	13	BAPU	1		-		
	-	CEDB	-		5		
	21	ATTACK	1			3	ID (former ITS)

The process of EU integration, accession and its related sub-processes of Europeanization of various social, political, policy and institutional systems have largely determined the overall framework for party development. Bulgarian political parties have structured their activities in line with the provisions and principles of the new, post-communist Constitution of 1991. Furthermore, interaction with European party partners and membership in large party family organizations provided a crucial impetus and direction of party development. This process was assisted by various party foundations (NGOs) from some 'old' EU member states (Germany, France, the United Kingdom, etc.) Importantly, such cooperation and membership has been decisive for the legitimacy of Bulgarian parties both on national level but also in an international context. Impact has been most pronounced in the areas of party ideological profile, elite training, institutional building, etc.

Ever since the first elections for the EP in 1979, they have been regarded and analyzed as 'second-order' national elections. Essentially, this concerns both the political strategies of participating parties and the perceptions and motivations of the electorates in the member states. This observation largely holds for the first Bulgarian EP elections. In Bulgaria, EU integration and EU membership has been consistently perceived as systemic benefits with a rather undifferentiated view of the various institutional elements of the organization – the general formula of "permissive consensus" has been maintained ever since 1995, when the formal application for membership was submitted. This has been characteristic of political as well as societal attitudes. The campaign strategies of the major political parties viewed the EP elections as low-risk event, because of: (1) the insignificant differences amongst major parties on EU related issues; (2) the convenient timing (the middle of the parliamentary mandate); and (3) the favorable economic tends. The first EP elections in Bulgaria occurred with a sense of occasion and little of the EU political and policy agenda entering public discourse and debate, largely reproducing the larger trend of the other 'new member states' – low turnout, relative advantage for the opposition parties and low budget campaigning.

Nomination and selection processes by party

Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP)

The BSP prepared for the first European Parliament Elections in 2007 with the self-confidence of a governing party, which had managed to win the 2006 presidential elections with a landslide victory. The presidential election results were perceived as legitimating the social-liberal formula of the coalition cabinet: /1/ "third way" economic policy rather liberal than social in format, /2/ based on historic reconciliation of the reformed left (former communist) with the party of the former monarch and with the party of the Turkish minority, repressed by the communist regime. The 2007 political aims of the BSP were set "in package" – one and the same strategy for both the European and the local elections (the latter expected to be held in October 2007). Within the coalition the goal was to counterbalance the neo-liberal priorities of the two partner parties (NDSS and MRF) and set new policy priorities for the second half of the government mandate - healthcare and education reforms and increased social policy spending. The BSP sought to legitimize this policy shift by receiving increased popular support, i.e. larger number of votes than the combined electoral result of the two governing liberal coalition partners. The BSP also sought to overpower the only party, which was able to erode effectively the electoral support for the left on national level - the radical protest party 'Attack', which persistently accused the socialists of betraying the national interests and deserting the social policy priorities.

Being the oldest and by far the most institutionalized Bulgarian party, in 2007 the BSP also set as a priority to stimulate the generation change and strengthen the pro-European attitudes of middle-aged party activists and supporters. The party leadership was effectively performing a "two-level game": /1/ strengthen the younger, reformist representation in the EU institutions by incorporating the priorities of PES in the party program, and by getting actively involved in PES initiatives; /2/ initiating a "socially-sensitive" campaign soothing the Eurosceptic attitudes of the older generation of party supporters and party lobbies (concerned with the symbolic issue of closing down of units III and IV of *Kozloduy* NPP, or with the pragmatic issue of utilization of European funds).

A specific European dimension of the 2007 campaign was that BSP abandoned the strategy of running in broad coalition with small left parties and green organizations – the socialist party decided to register under the name of PES (Platform of European Socialists) thus giving up the

traditional label “Coalition for Bulgaria”. As a result it competed with several former partners, namely labor, social democratic and communist organizations registered four separate lists, gaining nearly 4% combined. The second change concerned the nomination of the MEP candidates – the routine process of initial nomination by local and regional party organizations was ignored. The central (national) executive body of the party approved the party list, outlining in the selection criteria the preference for young professionals and women, but without consultation with the socialist youth and women's organization. As a result in the top six positions in the party list, there were only two replacements. One acting MEP appointee (Mladen Cherveniakov) was replaced by a sitting Member of the national Parliament (Iliana Iotova), perhaps aimed at increasing the number of women. The second replacement consisted in downgrading of acting MEP (Georgi Bliznashki) from 6th to 7th place in the party list, introducing a non-party nomination of the President of the Organization of the Jews in Bulgaria “Shalom” Emil Kalo on the sixth position that was considered electable.

Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (CEDB)

The participation of CEDB in the 2007 EP Elections in Bulgaria is probably the most interesting feature of these elections. Established in December 2006, the party was still in a nascent stage of its development both institutionally but also ideologically. Before its formal registration it had relied on a non-governmental organization (European Democratic Path), which continued to play a role in the months preceding the May 2007 vote. Further, the people working on the establishment of the party had been in regular, informal dialogue with the EPP and some European, sister parties belonging to it. While this impacted the ideological and programmatic component of the work of CEDB, its political *raison d'être* was largely based on the claim for systemic opening of the Bulgarian polity. This general stance had relevance for the selection of management mode of MEP candidates. The other unique and notable feature of CEDB was related to the fact that the EP elections were the first contested (and won) by the party. Hence, it aimed to present and position its political ideas with a predominant orientation towards its national electoral debut. As a consequence, regardless of the significant input by the EPP, the electoral platform and campaign of CEDB was primarily intended as an entry onto the Bulgarian political scene. This is evidenced by the highlights of its campaign: emphasis on impact of the European elections on national politics, criticism of incumbent government on various topics, emphasis on conditions for investment and impact of EU funds in Bulgaria, etc. The party had consulted the EPP Manifesto from the 2005 EP elections and had sought compatibility with its positions.

The candidate selection process of CEDB followed the party procedures as stipulated in its regulations. The elections for EP were not perceived as belonging to a political logic or dynamic requiring deviation from the standard selection provisions. Yet, the procedure is notable with its high degree of formalization of criteria, independent evaluation by subcommittee of candidates (what could be termed ‘political casting’), relatively high level of openness of the process. Formal criteria were initially defined for prospective candidates with membership not a formal requirement. Among these were: knowledge of at least two official, non-Bulgarian languages of the EU, tertiary education, at least five years of relevant professional experience and knowledge of EU institutions and policies. These formal criteria were then communicated to regional structures of the party which had the task of collecting and initially screening prospective candidates. The submission of candidacies occurred through the municipal party structures to the regional party structures. Around 200 in total had been submitted to the regional level. 50 candidacies were then forwarded to the Executive Council with each regional structure passing on one or two prospective candidates. The actual handling and selection was performed by a specially appointed sub-committee consisting of seven members. The composition of the sub-

committee included Members of the Bulgarian Parliament, diplomats, experts in European affairs, a political scientist as well as the leader of the party. The 50 candidacies were initially reduced to 30 and these people were then asked to undergo a formal exam procedure comprising of two components. The first component was a 20 minute interview in which each prospective candidate was asked to respond to a series of questions relating to the work of the EP. The second component was a written test using a points system to rank the candidates. As an outcome of this formal selection procedure, 21 people were ranked and selected (18 for the actual party list and 3 replacements). The final determination and ranking of the candidates had been done in the presence of the informal leader of the party, Boiko Borisov (mayor of Sofia and legally prevented from being an official leader of a political party during the term of office). The Executive Committee finalises the order of the party list. In this instance, the informal leader of the party intervened solely regarding the person leading the list. The other candidates, from positions 2 to 18, were listed in an order corresponding to the outcome of the formal selection procedure. As mentioned already, in the period preceding the EP elections, CEDB had established good working contacts with two organizations: a non-governmental organization, European Democratic Path and a well-established Agrarian party, Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union – People's Union. There was a prior agreement with the latter that they would have candidate on the list depending on how well he/she performed in the formal process of selection. In the end, the candidate was moved up the list and won a seat in the EP.

Democrats for Strong Bulgaria (DSB)

DSB was established in June 2004 as a result of the split within the UDF on two issues: /1/ the assessment of the ruling mandate of the party (1997-2001); /2/ the coalition strategy of UDF. A group of UDF MPs who elected the former Prime Minister Ivan Kostov as their leader declared that they would stand up for the achievements of the UDF government and build on them, rejecting any coalition with other UDF splinter parties, or liberal formation as NDSS or its 2005 splinter Gergyovden.

The party faced the 2007 European elections after a series of electoral defeats, the most disastrous being the counterproductive coalition with UDF at the 2006 presidential elections. The DSB set two priorities in juxtaposition to its sister-party rival UDF: /1/ to affirm itself as a genuine pro-European, Christian democratic party (making a distinction to the leaning towards the conservative Euroscepticism of UDF leader Petar Stoyanov); /2/ to promote stratarchic procedures of candidate selection, organizing party primaries (rejecting accusation of oligarchic leadership style and absence of new faces). The selection process included ranking of the candidates in accordance with a set of criteria and primaries organized by the regional (local) party organizations. The party managed to revive rank and file support and attracted 4,35% of the votes, presumably sufficient to pass the 4% threshold on national elections, but far below the 5,56% threshold set for the European Parliament Elections.

Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF)

MRF is one of the oldest post-1989 political parties, established as early as January 1990. The party is member of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDRP) and had 3 observers in the EP following the accession of the party to the EU. MRF was a member of the national governing coalition at the time of the EP election and conducted a campaign focused on the continuation of certain EU-related issues from the national political debate. In this case, this was predominantly the matter of investment of EU funds in Bulgaria. Notably, the party ran its

EP election campaign through the establishment of EU Information Centres, which among other things functioned as training centres for individuals and organizations aimed at securing EU funding. The party had made little use of the political documents and programmes of the ELDRP and received little if any logistical and institutional support. The EP election strategy of MRF was largely defined as a continuation of its long-term aim of ‘opening’ an essentially minority party (of Bulgarian citizens of Turkish ethnic origin) to other sections of society and constructing it as a non-ethnic ‘liberal party’.

MRF followed the envisaged procedure in its regulations for the nomination and selection of candidates for the EP elections in May 2007. Prior to the nomination stage, central headquarters had defined a set of formal criteria and communicated them to the regional and municipal structures of the party. These included knowledge of other official languages of the EU, university education, knowledge and experience in international affairs, good standing within the party, etc. Municipal structures were then free to make and submit their nominations to the regional party structure for evaluation and screening. The youth structure of the party followed the same procedure, finally forwarding 13 candidacies to the central unit of the youth organization. The regional councils had examined the nominations made by the municipal structures. The Central Operative Bureau subsequently examined the forwarded candidacies with the Central Council, formally approving the nominations. In compliance with party rules, final ordering was made by the leader of the party, Ahmed Dogan, with 2 of the proposed nominations making it to the final party list. It is remarkable, that the MRF party ballots include only one of the three sitting MPs, who were temporarily appointed as MEPs.

When finalizing the party list, the leadership of the party had employed an informal quota principle, thereby dividing the 18 positions on the list into three subgroups by ethnic origin (Bulgarian, Turkish and Roma), ensuring equal representation of these groups. The gender balance was also observed, placing two female candidates on the first and second position. The second position was given to a candidate of the youth organization of the party. MRF had a political agreement for these elections with only one organization: Roma Party led by Tzvetelin Kanchev.

The party didn’t encourage preference voting, and its results showed the lowest share of preferences - just 7,2% , two to three times less than the rest of the parties. Eventually this was a clever choice, as in the case of MRF the divergence between the preferences of the electorate had been the strongest – only the first seated was “approved” by the electors, while the ethnic Bulgarians got several hundred preference votes, the ethnic Turks and Roma got several thousand.

National Movement Simeon the Second (NMSS), renamed National Movement for Stability and Prosperity (NMSP)

The party approached the election with a serious internal conflict within its leadership and parliamentary group, which eventually resulted in a split – 16 out of the 53 NMSP MPs established a new parliamentary group under the name of Bulgarian New Democracy (mid November 2007). Later, the new group joined the parliamentary opposition, claiming that the 2005 coalition formula was exhausted because its primary goal (entering EU on January 2007) had been achieved. The NMSP splinter group demanded early elections, assessing Stanishev’s cabinet as counterproductive and ineffective.

By May 2007 the NDSP was still united and was seeking to maximize popular support by promoting several priorities in the selection of candidates – young, female, professionals,

supported by local/regional civil society networks. In seeking to endorse a new generation of politicians, the national executive body disregarded the demands of the current MPs and the regional party activists. The party followed its own routine nomination procedure with nominations coming from different party fractions, but the final line-up of the party list was presented in the last moment as obeying and regarding the final personal "will" of the party leader. Only one of the acting MEPs remained on the party ballot (placed third), partially due to the campaign "new faces", partially because the polling results indicated that the party has slight chances to win more than one mandate. The party list included a famous pop-star and the former Minister of Foreign Affairs (2001-2005) who demanded to be given the last, 18th position on the ballot, to signal the importance of the vote and the "team spirit" within the party. The campaign focused on opening European information centres, training programs for EU funding procedures indicative of the instrumental value attributed to EU membership.

In terms of results the case of NDSP should be considered as a relative success, though the party lost three of its four EP mandates. Regardless of the dramatic loss of public support, registered by all polling agencies, the NDSP managed to mobilize active voters (it has the highest share of preferential votes – 27%) and cross over the 5,56% threshold. On the other hand, the party electoral results indicated the second highest level of divergence between the preferences of the selectorate and the electorate, which further undermined the charisma of the party leader and eventually contributed to the party split in October 2007.

'Attack'

The political movement-cum-political party was established in April 2005 and has had one observer in the EP during the period before the May 2007 elections for the EP. The party is characterized by veiled anti-systemic and nationalist rhetoric and a haphazard mixture of economic extreme Left positions such as nationalization and social extreme Right stances such as anti-immigration, defense of Christian values, etc. In terms of EU rhetoric, 'Attack' called for re-opening of the closed Kozlodui nuclear plant reactors and the reopening of the accession negotiation chapters. The emergence of the party was spearheaded by a network of informal contacts of individuals formerly linked with the previous regime and a cable network TV channel serving as a platform for voicing and organizing initial party activities. From its inception the party has been reliant on its charismatic leader and his ability to effectively convey its positions. Further, instead of elaborating a well-developed body of party ideology, platform and policy, 'Attack' adopted a list of 20 points, which serve as the main party document relating to these dimensions of political organization. The party has also adopted regulations setting out its internal processes and procedures. Its political behaviour has been one of radical opposition combining Parliamentary opportunity with extra-Parliamentary means of exerting political pressure (rallies, demonstrations, sit-ins, etc.) When sending an observer to the EP after the accession of Bulgaria to the EU, 'Attack' (together with a similar Romanian party 'Greater Romania') made a decisive contribution towards the creation of the 'Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty' Group in the EP. Whilst a member of this group, 'Attack' supported a platform proposing restrictive anti-immigration measures and steps to strengthen Christian values. In the run-up to the EP elections in May 2007 'Attack' received some institutional and public support from the parties in the 'Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty' Group in the EP, for instance coordinating and exchanging views and analyses on issues linked to the Roma minority and 'Islamization' in Europe. Some of this remained in the actual campaigns (positions against Turkey's accession to the EU, preservation of national sovereignty and measures against the 'extreme bureaucratization' of the EU, etc) The other campaign issues related to the desired political isolation of the Turkish minority party in Bulgaria and the handling of EU funds. The

party called for investment of EU funds in the social security and health sector as well as the education sector (building of hospitals and schools).

Candidate selection for MEPs was not considered to require a procedure different from the one applied in cases of national, Parliamentary elections. Nominations for candidates were made by the municipal structures of the party (in this instance, the municipal caucuses). These nominations are then submitted directly to the national level structure dealing with such matters. In the case of 'Attack', this is the Central Common (operational party management body between meetings of the highest body, the National Common), which has the final authority to nominate candidates. The Central Common is a seven-member body composed of the leader of the party, his/her deputy, financial officer of the party and four party members. 'Attack' is structurally a leader-biased organization. The members of the Central Common are elected by the highest body but are nominated by the party leader. The same holds for the controlling organ of the party. In the case of the EP elections we have not been able to find data about the number of proposed nominations. The overarching influence of the leader, Volen Siderov, is further evidenced by the fact that his step-son, Dimitar Stoyanov, was elected MP and then observer to the EP. Mr. Stoyanov was also nominated to head the party list for the 2007 EP elections.

Union of Democratic Forces (UDF)

UDF approached the first European Parliament Elections in 2007 with the self-perception of having made the most significant contribution to the accession of Bulgaria to the EU. The predominant feeling among the leadership and the rank and file of the party was of this election as 'their election', as the occasion of first exercise of an important, just gained, right of participation in the political life of the EU. The party had its MEPs between the day of accession (1 January 2007) and the day of the EP elections (20 May 2007) and had begun to develop its political and institutional capacity to participate in the work of the EP. Its key dilemma at this stage was related to the definition of its electoral strategy, more particularly, the balance between 'European' and 'national' issues and commitments given the history of the champion of EU membership. In the end, its platform was a mixture of prominent issues of topical concern to Bulgaria (removal of excise for production of home-made spirits and energy independence) and commitments further integrating the country into the EU (membership of Schengen and the Eurozone). The EP elections came at a time when the UDF had gone through a period of worsening relations with the European People's Party. The party had made a commitment to joining the Movement for European Reform (established), while attempting to preserve its membership in the EPP. In March 2007, the EPP had decided to suspend UDF membership and to refrain from further supporting various UDF activities. In April, UDF party leader, Petar Stoyanov declared the party's loyalty to the EPP but the election in May came with the two sides in decidedly difficult political relationship.

The UDF did not diverge from its usual party regulations-based mode of selection candidates for public office. First elections to a new body, the European Parliament, were not considered basis for any alteration or change to the normal procedures for candidate selection. The novelty and specificity of these elections did not constitute a reason for such changes. Rather, there was appreciation for certain obvious requirements for these positions including knowledge of other official languages of the EU, experience in international affairs, awareness of basic EU processes and policies, etc. These were not formalized in any party document but constituted informal basic criteria at the nomination stage. The nomination process was open for all party municipal level structures (lowest party level) with suggested names being forwarded to the higher structure of regional party organizations for further screening and selection (28 in number,

corresponding to the number of regions in the country). Each party regional structure was able to nominate 1 to 3 candidates depending on the electoral strength of the party in the given region. Regions with significant electoral presence of UDF (such as the capital and the larger cities) could nominate a few, while the other regions could propose only one candidate. Final selection and ordering of the party list was done by the National Council as is the case with national elections. The main interesting event in the nomination process was the decision of the party leader and former President, Petar Stoyanov to head the party list. The final ordering was performed as a mixture of internal foreign policy standing and experience, EU expertise, political seniority, intervention by the party leader.

Conclusions and recommendations

The collected evidence shows that most of the parties have conducted their nominations and selection procedures in accordance with usual, regulation-based provisions employed in national elections. However, some of them have identified a political logic for adjustments or changes not in the procedures of selection, but in the selection criteria – younger candidates, increasing the number of women, promoting candidates with linguistic and expert skills considering the activities within the EP. In the particular case of the MRF this included promotion of ethnic Bulgarians to the electable positions in the party lists. There is almost no evidence that Bulgarian parties and their European counterparts have had any discussions regarding this matter.

The overall strategies of the Bulgarian political parties in the period leading up to the EP elections are fully in line with their national political strategies. Most poignant examples include the MRF and CEDB. The former persisted with its policy of ‘opening’ towards other ethnic and professional groups in Bulgarian society, while the latter conducted a ‘civic’ / meritocratic scheme of ‘political casting’, thereby seeking to legitimize its political claims at the time of their entry in the political system.

The nomination and selection procedures for the 2007 EP elections confirm, with some variance, the well-established trend of significant leader impact. In terms of formal prerogative, this is most evident in the cases of ‘Attack’, NMSS and MRF, while in the instance of UDF and BSP such influence had been more moderate and less formal (mainly through the framing of debate, influence on presenting and promoting nominated candidates, etc.). DSB and CEDB are the parties that consistently promoted stratarchic selection procedures. At the same time, all parties report lower ‘political temperature’ with internal in-fighting and positioning less prominent due to the perception of lowered stakes in these elections.

The newly introduced preference voting was not encouraged by any of the parties, but it showed **substantial difference** between the preferences of the selectorate and the electorate in two parties (NMSS and MRF), **weak but visible difference** in UDF and BSP and **perfect congruence** for CEDB, DSB and ‘Attack’. The strong incongruence in the case of NMSS and MRF might be partially due to the fact that their party list introduced substantial replacements of the acting MEPs appointed by the National Assembly from amongst its members.

The survey shows that Bulgarian political parties have generally employed the occasion of the EP elections to buttress their external legitimacy with their European, ‘sister’ parties. UDF is an exception here with its unsuccessful attempt to shift from the EPP towards the Movement for European Reform. Ideological impact from the European parties has been insignificant with

most parties mainly including key ideological assertions in their platforms without developing these into a debate about EU policies. Institutional and publicity support was also of secondary importance with the exception of 'Attack', which did receive significant support from the member parties of the 'Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty' Group in the EP.

There are some important considerations, which need to be borne in mind when attempting to formulate **recommendations** in the context of this survey. The structure of political incentives at EP elections is such that the likelihood of their persistence as 'second-order' elections is high. Political strategy is defined mainly vis-à-vis national variables such as timing in the national electoral cycle, ad hoc legitimacy issues in the European context, etc. Hence, it is extremely difficult to formulate recommendations relevant for this end of the political process. The only likely source of strategy change remains the increased voter awareness of the growing importance of the EP within the EU system of institutions. In such circumstances, possible pressure for the inclusion of a more prominent European dimension may be envisaged.

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List of parties with more than 2 % at the European Parliament in the 2007 elections

- Citizens for Democratic Development of Bulgaria: 21,68%
- Movement for Rights and Freedoms: 21,41%
- Bulgarian Socialist Party: 20,26%
- Political Party 'Attack': 14,20%
- National Movement Simeon the Second: 6,27%
- Union of Democratic Forces: 4,74%
- Democrats for Strong Bulgaria: 4,35%

List of conducted interviews

Bulgarian Socialist Party

Kristian Vigenin, Member of the European Parliament

Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria

Nikolay Mladenov, Member of the European Parliament
Radoslav Tochev, International Secretary

Democrats for Strong Bulgaria

Daniel Mitov, Deputy Chair (since August 2008) and Candidate for Member of the European Parliament
Svetoslav Malinov, MP, Candidate for Member of European Parliament

Movement for Rights and Freedoms

Sibel Redzheb, Vice President, Youth Organization

National Movement "Simeon the II"

Christina Christova, Deputy Chair and Member of the European Parliament (January 1 - May 20, 2007)

Union of Democratic Forces

Evgeni Kanev, Candidate for Member of European Parliament
Lubov Panayotova, Deputy Chair and Candidate for Member of the European Parliament

List of questions of conducted interviews

Please describe the formal mechanisms of nomination and selection of candidates for public office in your party? More specifically, relating to the EP elections of May 2007?

Were there any formal criteria stipulated by the party in the case of the EP elections held in May 2007?

Would you identify any differences between the procedures used at the last national elections in 2005 and those used at the EP elections of 2007?

Would you say that the EP elections were conducted by your party in a manner different from that of national elections?

How would you evaluate the role that your party leader and leadership played at the various stages at the EP elections?

Did your party have formal agreements with other political parties at the time of the EP elections in May 2007? With which party and what did they entail?

What were the relations between your party and your European party to which you belong? When drafting your election platform and preparing your election campaign, did you take into consideration the various political documents adopted by your European party?

What, if any, kind of support did your party receive from your European sister party? Political? Ideological? Institutional? Logistical? Any other?

Are there any other issues, points, comments, etc. you would make regarding the matters that we have discussed?

Use of preferential voting in 2007 EP elections

	Received votes	Voters having used preferential voting	Percentage of voters having used preferential voting
NMSS	121398	33098	27,3 %
UDF	91871	24732	27 %
BSP	414786	70386	17 %
Attack	275237	45891	16,7%
DSB	84350	13958	16,5 %
CEDB	420001	65099	15,5 %
MRF	392650	28432	7,2 %

CZECH REPUBLIC

Introduction

The objective of this research report is to describe and analyse the procedures applied by political parties in the Czech Republic for selecting candidates that will contest for seats in the 2009 European parliament election. The study has the following structure. Firstly, the Czech electoral system used for the European parliament elections is briefly described. Secondly, the candidate nomination procedures of the following political parties are analysed: the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL), the Green Party (SZ), the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) and the Association of Independent Candidates – the European Democrats (SNK-ED). Thirdly, we summarise the commonalities and differences between the procedures used by the parties.

Since 2002, elections to the European Parliament are regulated by an agreement on uniform electoral procedures. Basically this means that in all member states a proportional electoral system should be used for the elections. There are, however, significant points where the applied electoral systems can vary between the member states: 1) The member states can use either a list system or the single transferable vote, 2) the member states can, if desired, adopt preferential voting, 3) the member states are free to divide the country into constituencies, as long as the proportional nature of the system is not threatened, and 4) a minimum threshold for representation of parties can be set, the maximum being 5 %.²⁶ The Czech Republic has made the following choices on these points: 1) a list system is used and the d'Hondt electoral formula is applied, 2) the ballot is ordered but allows the voter to mark two preferred candidates, 3) the whole country is one constituency, and 4) the threshold in the Czech Republic is 5 %.²⁷ Since the effective threshold in 2004 was 3%, this means that the Greens would have received a mandate if no threshold was used.

Studying the parties' selection of candidates for the European Parliament

The six political parties included in this study are the political parties that received more than 2 % in both the last European election and the last election to the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament (held in 2006). Five of the parties are represented in the Chamber of Deputies; the exception is the European Democrats. This party, however, is represented in the European Parliament, which is not the case of the Greens.

The discussion on the political parties takes into account the following questions:

- What are the formal procedures used by the party for establishing the electoral list?
- Approximately where on a scale of inclusive – exclusive party selectorates can the party be categorised?
- Are there any specific criteria regarding the qualities and qualifications of the candidates? That is, are they expected to possess some specific qualifications, and are

²⁶ D. Farrell and R. Scully, Electing the European Parliament: How Uniform are 'Uniform' Electoral Systems?, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 43(5), p. 970.

²⁷ zákon č. 62/2003 Sb. o volbách do Evropského parlamentu a o změně některých zákonů [Law nr. 62/2003 Sb. Regarding elections to the European Parliament and regarding changes of some laws]

- there any concerns in regard to their gender, age, etc.? Should they be members of the party?
- Does the European party group in any way influence the selection (even indirectly)?
- Are there any indications that informal criteria in any significant way change the formal procedure for establishing the electoral list?

The discussion of each political party starts with a short description of the nature of the political party referring to, first, the number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and in the European Parliament and second, to the member base of the party.

Regarding the second question, we are referring to the parameter which is normally considered the most important in the research of candidate selection procedure, which is the question of who selects the candidates.²⁸ To illustrate the possible position on a scale between exclusive and inclusive models of candidate selection, five different categories can be made: 1] The most exclusive system would be if the party leader selected the candidates. 2] In a slightly less exclusive model, small nominating committees play the central role in the selection procedure. 3] In the middle of the field we have selected party agencies or selection by delegates, for instance at a party convention, where the delegates have been selected specially to pick nominees for the election. 4] The party members directly select the candidates, i.e. party primaries. Normally the members of the party have to be registered, have had to pay a certain but often modest fee and sometimes they should have been members for a certain amount of time. 5] The most inclusive model is when more or less all voters can take part. There might be demands that they should be registered as party supporters. This is what we know from the US as open or closed primaries.²⁹

In the answer to the third question we discuss whether the party leadership or some other party convent, etc. have specified certain criteria for candidates. For instance, have they expressed the demand that candidates should possess certain language demands or knowledge of the EU? Are there any other specific preferences regarding the candidates' qualities? In this question we also take into consideration what kind of persons are preferred, if this is stated, for instance regarding gender representation, regional diversity of candidates, etc.

The fourth question suggests that the European party group might influence the procedure in both a formal and an informal way. For instance it might be the case that gender is considered important at the European level and that the party therefore decides to use some kind of party quotas to increase the number of female candidates on its list.

The Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL)

The Christians have been represented in the Deputy Chamber of the Czech Parliament throughout the country's post-communist history. In the 2006 election they received 7.22 percent of the votes and 13 mandates. In the 2004 elections to the European parliament they received 9.57 percent of the votes and 2 mandates. The party has, compared to other Czech political parties, a rather large number of members - in 2002 7.5 percent of the electorate.³⁰

The candidates for the election to the European Parliament in 2009 were elected at the party's convention in Pardubice in April 2008. On the scale of inclusive-exclusive models for candidate

²⁸ G. Rahat, Candidate Selection: the Choice before the Choice, *Journal of Democracy*, 18(1), 2007, p. 160.

²⁹ G. Rahat, pp. 160-162.

³⁰ L. Linek and S. Pecháček, Low Membership in Czech Political Parties: Party Strategy or Structural Determinants?, *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 23(2), 2007, p. 263.

selection presented above, the KDU-ČSL is approximately in the middle, 3, which means that it is very inclusive by Czech standards. The candidates are selected by the party convention delegates, based on nominations of either the regional committees or the country conference of the party.³¹ In total, 15 candidates were nominated and the party convention decided on the ranking of the nominees. Additional names will be added by the party commission³² in order for the list to be complete.³³

The party has 14 regional committees and in total 90 districts. The regional committees nominate candidates to the European Parliament based on selections from the district committees.³⁴ The candidates nominated to the party convention have to first of all declare that they will not run as candidates for any other political subject at the same time., However, there is no explicit demand that the candidates have to be members of the party even if this was the case among all of the fifteen candidates nominated to the party convention in 2008. In addition they should pay a nomination fee of 10,000 Czech crowns.³⁵ Besides these two demands, the country conference of the party has stated that candidates should have the following five qualifications: 1) they should master one world language at the communicative level, 2) have professional qualifications that would suit any of the EP's parliamentary committees, 3) have a country wide reputation or potential, 4) be prepared to stay outside of the Czech Republic for the greater part of the year, and 5) have proven him/herself politically successful (this is defined as having gained the people's confidence in earlier elections at any level).³⁶ However, nothing is done to check whether the candidates actually fulfill these five criteria.³⁷

The delegates at the convention vote by a closed vote for the candidates. Each delegate can deliver votes for 1/5 of the candidates at the maximum. In 2008 there were 15 candidates and each delegate could vote for three different candidates. The number of votes for each candidate is decisive for the candidates' order on the list.³⁸ The multiple votes are believed to be beneficial for less established candidates who manage to make a good impression at the convention.³⁹

The delegates to the convention, who thus determine the order of candidates, are members of district organisations elected at the district conferences⁴⁰ and members of the party conference. At the convention the party's two current members of the EP received by far the biggest number of votes. Since the party is expected to gain a maximum of two mandates in this election, only the first two candidates are considered electable. The reason that these two MEPs were

³¹ This is the highest decision making body of the party inbetween the party conventions. This body should meet at least three times a year. The regions are represented in the conference based on the principle "1 representant for every 800 members", party leadership, members of parliament and members of European Parliament. The current conference has 89 members.

³² The party's executive body.

³³ The maximum number of candidates on a list for a single party is one third more than the total number of MEPs elected in the Czech Republic, i.e. 32.

³⁴ KDU-ČSL 2007, Volební řád primárních voleb pro volby do Evropského parlamentu 2009 [Election rules for the primary elections for the election to the European Parliament 2009], KDU-ČSL 2005, Stanovy Křesťanské a demokratické unie - Československé strany lidové [statute of the Christian and Democratic Union - the Czechoslovak People's Party], available at: <http://www.kdu.cz/default.asp?page=510&idr=10586&IDCI=22011>

³⁵ Approximately 385 Euros.

³⁶ KDU-ČSL 2007.

³⁷ Interview with representative of KDU-ČSL, January 19, 2009.

³⁸ KDU-ČSL 2008. Primární volby do EP [Primary elections to the EP], available at: http://www.kdu.cz/subweb/default.asp?page=51&IDR=10615&id_rok=14

³⁹ Interview with representative of KDU-ČSL, January 19, 2009.

⁴⁰ A district is entitled one delegate for every 250 members.

successful in defending their position on the list is argued to have been their productivity in the parliament in combination with their visibility in the Czech media. The party leadership did not actively intervene in order to affect their re-nomination (Interview). The party, however, has shown a conservative approach to change on their ballot lists in other elections as well. In the 2006 national election, for instance, all the KDU-ČSL MPs were placed on electable places on the ballot lists.⁴¹

The party's central secretariat has, however, actively influenced the shape of the list in other ways. For instance, one of the two women on the list was asked to act as a candidate, as it was believed that more young female candidates would improve the image of the party. This might also have been a result of the rather weak interest in the party for the 2009 election. With the exception of the two top candidates, many of the names on the list are either young people, wanting to get more attention within the party, or former Members of the national Parliament that failed to defend their positions in the last elections. The European People's Party, of which the KDU-ČSL is a member of, is not argued to have any impact on the party's nomination process.⁴²

The Civic Democratic Party (ODS)

The Civic Democratic Party (ODS) is a right-wing, liberal-conservative party and constitutes (apart from the Czech Social Democratic Party) one of the two main parties in the country. Currently, the ODS is the leading party of the government. The party has 81 mandates in the Chamber of Deputies (40.5%).

In the following analysis, we will deal only with the currently valid procedures of EP candidate selection, as they are basically the same as the procedures used in the previous EP elections.⁴³ The formal rules of the process are set up by The Rules for Setting the Candidate List of the ODS for the 2009 EP Elections⁴⁴ (henceforth the Rules). According to the Rules, the initial nomination is carried out by area associations which associate several local associations that represent the lowest level of the party's organisation.⁴⁵ The body exercising the selection process at the area level is the area assembly (oblastní sněm) as the highest body of the area association. The assembly involves the members of the Area Council, the representatives of local assemblies and the MPs, senators and regional deputies registered in the area. In addition to individual EP candidates, regional assemblies also suggest the candidates for the leader of the electoral list.

Subsequently, the nomination process shifts from area to regional associations. At this level, the nominations are examined by regional assemblies as the highest bodies of regional associations. Regional assemblies include the members of the Regional Council, the representatives of area associations, the Members of the Executive Council elected in the region and MPs, senators and regional deputies registered in the region. The regional assembly approves the candidates, including candidates for the list leader, submitted by the area assemblies subordinated to it. Each regional assembly is entitled to choose, in this way, two or three candidates (except for the leader candidates).

⁴¹ J. Kyloušek, České parlamentní volby 2006: analýza kandidátních listin, *Politologický časopis*, Nr. 1.2007, p. 87.

⁴² Interview with representative of KDU-ČSL, January 19, 2009.

⁴³ E-mail communication with an ODS representative, January 5, 2009.

⁴⁴ Pravidla pro sestavení kandidátní listiny ODS pro volby do EP 2009.

⁴⁵ The 2009 Rules are not publicly available, and the author obtained them from the party's Secretariat. In addition to the 2009 Rules, the analysis also proceeds from *The Code of Rules (Stanovy)* of the ODS. *The Code of Rules* is available at <http://www.ods.cz/clenstvi/stanovy.php?row=1&col=4>

The resulting electoral list is compiled by the Panel and the Executive Council. The Panel associates the party chairman, vice-chairmen, and chairs of parliamentary clubs. It has the general responsibility for managing the party between the meetings of the Executive Council. The Executive Council is the corporate body of the party and manages it between the Congresses. It involves the members of the Panel and the representatives of regions (according to the size of their membership). The central manager and the members of the government also participate in the Council, even though they do not dispose with a voting right. The Panel obtains the candidates approved in the regions and suggests their ranking.

Afterwards, the Panel delivers the candidate list to the Executive Council, together with its justification of the proposed ranking. The Council enjoys the right to make changes in the ranking suggested by the Panel. If changes are proposed, they are being approved separately from the voting on the final composition of the list. The voting on both the changes in the ranking and on the final composition of the list is secret.

As for the timing of the 2009 nomination process, area assemblies were supposed to nominate candidates until the end of August 2008. The approval of candidates by regional assemblies was expected to last until the beginning of December 2008. The deadline for the resulting list was the end of January 2009.

According to the criteria applied in our model, the ODS selection system can be categorised as moderately inclusive (essentially it is a combination of models 2 and 3, which were outlined in the introduction of our analysis). On the one hand, the candidates are selected by the lower levels of the party's organisation. The initial nominations are carried out by area assemblies, and the selection of candidates is exercised by regional assemblies. Moreover, regional assemblies also suggest candidates for the election leader. However, nominating committees represented by the central bodies (the Panel and Executive Council) also play a significant role. It is those bodies that determine the ranking of the candidates and therefore crucially decide who will represent the party in the EP.

With regards to the qualities and qualifications of candidates, the Rules do not define any specific criteria. The questionnaire sent by an ODS representative confirms a general absence of such criteria.⁴⁶ However, the party's representative revealed that the involved bodies are supposed to nominate candidates that have an adequate professional and language qualification for the position of an MEP. The regional balance is secured by the participation of all regional associations in the nomination process. In contrast, there are no rules regarding education, age, and gender. According to the questionnaire, the European party fraction (ELS-ED) by no means influences the selection of the ODS candidates for EP elections. The ODS does not consult the candidate selection or its election campaign with the fraction.

The representative of the party underlined that the candidate selection is determined by the adopted Rules and the Code of Rules of the party. S/he denied the existence of any informal rules that would, in addition to the formal rules, affect the process. However, it seems that a crucial informal element results from the comparison of a previously published study⁴⁷ with the currently valid Rules and the information provided by the party representative. As discussed above, the Rules indicate that the nomination process starts at the level of area associations. Still,

⁴⁶ The following analysis relies on a questionnaire received from a party representative, January 20, 2009.

⁴⁷ L. Linek and J. Outlý, Výběr kandidátů do Evropského parlamentu v hlavních českých politických stranách, *Politologický časopis*, Nr. 1, 2005.

Linek and Outlý (2005) claimed that in the 2004 EP elections it was the local associations that stood at the beginning of the process. They even emphasised that an area assembly considers only the nominations coming from the local level and cannot make its own nominations. When asked, the party representative acknowledged that the proposals for EP candidates were sent to regional associations by both local and area associations. The involvement of local associations constitutes, therefore, a significant informal element (or at least an element that is not directly stated by the formal Rules).

The Green Party (SZ)

The Green party (SZ) represents one of the smaller Czech parliamentary parties. It was only in the last parliamentary elections in 2006 that the party gained representation in the Chamber of Deputies, when it achieved six mandates (3%). The SZ currently also constitutes one of the parties taking part in the government.

Since the Green party is not currently represented in the EP, we will omit an analysis of the election rules that the party used in the 2004 EP elections, and concentrate on the currently valid rules. When examining the EP election rules of the SZ, it is crucial to look first at the general Negotiation Order⁴⁸ of the party and second, more specifically, at the distinction between the so-called one-mandate and several-mandate bodies.⁴⁹ The several-mandate bodies are: the members of the Central Revision Committee (except for its chairman) and their alternates, members of the Republic Council and their alternates, vice-chairmen of the Republic Council and the members of the Councils of basic, city, and regional organisations (except for chairmen, vice-chairmen, and treasurers) and their alternates.

Concerning one-mandate bodies, the candidate that receives a simple majority wins. If no candidate receives a simple majority, there is a second round in which the two candidates with the two highest scores compete (the winner has to, again, get a simple majority). On the contrary, in contests for several-mandate bodies, it is all the candidates that get a simple majority that are elected. If the number of those candidates exceeds the number of the mandates, it is the candidates with the highest scores that are elected. If the number of the elected candidates is lower, the electoral committee declares a second round to which all the candidates that got more than 25 percent of the votes pass. The third possible round involves all the candidates that received at least 30 percent in the second round. Those that obtain more than 40 percent of the votes get elected.

The primary elections for the EP elections break up into two rounds. Regarding the forthcoming elections of 2009, the deadline for the first round was set up for 17 February 2009. The second round should start before 2 March 2009. The first round occurs at regional conferences.⁵⁰ The candidates for the EP electoral list considered at those conferences are nominated by local organisations. The election of candidates follows the general rules for any election into several-mandate bodies. The elections for the first five and for the remaining places of the candidate list are separated (the number of the remaining places cannot be higher than 19). The names of the elected candidates are reported to the party's Presidency.

⁴⁸ Jednací řád Strany zelených, available at: <http://www.zeleni.cz/47/clanek/jednaci-rad-strany-zelenych/>

⁴⁹ Jednací řád Strany zelených.

⁵⁰ Strana zelených, Řád primárních voleb Strany zelených pro volby do Evropského parlamentu v roce 2009 [The Primary Election Order of the Green Party for the 2009 European Parliament Elections], available at: <http://www.zeleni.cz/11986/clanek/rad-primarnich-voleb-sz-pro-volby-do-evropskeho-parlamentu/>

All the candidates that were elected in at least two regions qualify for the second round. Two separate lists for the second round are compiled by the Presidency. While the first list contains the candidates for the first five places of the electoral list, the second one involves the candidates for the remaining places. The candidates that were elected in at least five regions are placed on the first list. In case there are less than five candidates for the first list and less than 19 candidates for the second one, the Presidency completes the lists with other candidates that it has selected. Both lists are subsequently delivered to the Republic Council.

The Republic Council is the body deciding in the second round of the elections. The Council may add candidates to the list reflecting the previous elections in the regions under the two following conditions: 1) the submitted list contains fewer candidates than needed for the electoral list and 2) even after a third vote, the number of elected candidates is lower than the number of places on the electoral list (but see also the implications of the gender and regional representation rules discussed below). The candidates for the first five places of the electoral list are separately elected by the Council on the basis of the rules that apply to one-mandate bodies. The election of candidates for the remaining places proceeds from the rules for electing several-mandate bodies.

The nomination system of the SZ combines models 2 and 3, which were presented at the beginning of this study, and can be thus categorised as moderately inclusive. The decentralised element of the model stems from the nomination and selection of candidates at local and regional level. What also significantly reinforces the decentralised element is that the voting in the regions determines which candidates qualify for the contest over the first five places of the candidate list. Hence, it is not only the central Republic Council but also regional organisations that shape the ranking of candidates. Still, the power of the Republic Council is crucial as it is this body that makes the ultimate selection of particular candidates to be placed on the list.

Concerning the qualities and qualifications of candidates, a representative of the party underlined that there are no specific criteria that candidates would have to fulfill.⁵¹ Instead, the process rests on a purely ‘democratic’ principle, i.e. no categories of candidates are privileged or discriminated against. However, it is noteworthy that the Election Order gives the Presidency a right to add other candidates to the list sent to the Republic Council when ‘the gender structure’ of the list does not respect the ‘gender rule’.⁵² Similarly, the Presidency may even modify the final ranking of the elected candidates on the basis of the ‘gender rule’ or a balanced regional representation. The Election Order also stipulates that the second round of the primary elections has to respect the gender principle. More specifically, each set of three candidates (grouped by their subsequent order) must include at least one representative of the opposite gender. According to the interview, regional associations sometimes anticipate such criteria when selecting candidates.

The European fraction of the Greens does not, generally speaking, essentially affect the rules and strategies adopted by the Czech Greens. Still, the party cooperates with other Green parties with regard to some specific or tightly connected issues. For instance, all EP candidates have to sign a codex of an MEP which was drafted in cooperation with the German Green party.

The interview also revealed that there are no informal rules that would modify the process as set up by the Election Order. Nevertheless, an important element of the whole process lies in the informal strategies followed by some of its participants. For example, as the nomination process proceeds, smaller groups within the party emerge to support the candidacy of some well-known

⁵¹ Interview with representative of the SZ, January 21, 2009.

⁵² Strana zelených, Řád primárních voleb Strany zelených pro volby do Evropského parlamentu v roce 2009.

party representatives across the regions. Individual candidates also seek to reinforce their prospects by presenting themselves in several regions, e.g. by distributing their CVs.

The Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD)

The Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) is a left-wing party, one of the two strongest parties on the Czech political scene. The party is currently the second largest in the Chamber of Deputies, with 74 deputies out of 200. In the 2004 European Parliament elections, the party had a relatively bad score. It won only 2 mandates (out of 24). In autumn 2008, the party scored a landslide victory in the elections to regional assemblies and a third of the Senate (the upper chamber of the Czech Parliament).

The highest decision-making body is the Party Congress. In between two congresses, the decision-making power lies with the Central Executive Committee⁵³ and the Party Board.⁵⁴ The regional decision-making bodies are called the Regional Executive Committees.⁵⁵ The analysis will proceed in the following order. We will start with the obligatory criteria for the nominees. Then we will answer the question of who nominates the potential candidates. Finally, we will describe the process of the selection of candidates and the compilation of the electoral list. Attention will be devoted also to the formal and informal criteria serving for the final selection of the candidates.

The formal procedures for the selection of candidates and for the establishment of the electoral list are specified in the statutes of the party⁵⁶ and in the Code of the preparation for the European Parliament elections in 2009 (henceforth the Code).⁵⁷ Similarly to the situation in other parties, the rules for the 2009 elections are very much the same as in 2004. Thus, we can argue that the internal normative structure for the selection of candidates remains very stable. Nominees are recruited among party members and non-partisans.⁵⁸ Members of other political parties are not allowed to run as candidates. The Code is quite specific in obligatory requirements that need to be fulfilled by nominees (potential candidates). The first condition for the inclusion in the electoral list is proof of language skills (English or French). The nominee also signs a statutory declaration that s/he is not aware of any legal barriers against his candidature. S/he is required to provide a clean criminal record and a clean record.⁵⁹ Each nominee fills out a detailed form in which s/he provides more detailed info about his/her career, professional skills in some EU policies and language skills.

The candidates are proposed by the Regional Executive Committees and by the Party Board. There are 14 KVVs in total; each of them is allowed to nominate 2 candidates at the most. 10 more potential candidates are nominated by the Party Board⁶⁰ whose circa 32 members represent the top decision-making body of the party. The leader is proposed separately by the

⁵³ More than 100 persons delegated by the local and regional bodies of the party and by the Party Board.

⁵⁴ Circa 32 persons.

⁵⁵ The party also has bodies on county and local levels, but these do not figure in the process of the selection of the candidates for the European elections.

⁵⁶ ČSSD 2007, Stanovy České strany sociálně demokratické, 2007 [Statutes of the Czech Social Democratic Party] available at: <http://www.cssd.cz/o-nas/Stanovy-CSSD/>

⁵⁷ Řád přípravy na volby do Evropského parlamentu v roce 2009 [Code of the preparation for the European Parliament elections in 2009].

⁵⁸ Interview with representative of the ČSSD, January 23, 2009.

⁵⁹ Řád přípravy na volby do Evropského parlamentu v roce 2009.

⁶⁰ The deadline for the nomination was October 31, 2008.

Party Board.⁶¹ Beside that, at least 4 Regional Executive Committees acting in agreement can nominate their own common candidate. The nomination of the potential candidates is more centralised than in other parties.⁶² Almost half of the potential candidates are nominated by the central decision-making bodies; the rest are nominated by the regional bodies, and the lower (county and local) level is excluded from the nomination process. The central bodies also play a crucial role in the nomination and selection of the leader.

After receiving all the nominations, the Party Board adopts a draft electoral list which is then submitted to the Central Executive Committee. The CEC body adopts the final version of the electoral list through two-round voting. The first round is procedural: the members of the ŚVV decide through overt voting whether to take a vote on the draft electoral list (proposed by the Party Board) as a whole or whether to select candidates individually. The electoral list for the 2009 EP elections was adopted using the first method. At first, the Central Executive Committee decided to take a vote on the draft electoral list drawn up by the Party Board as a whole. This electoral list has been adopted in the subsequent secret ballot. If the Central Executive Committee had decided to skip the list drafted by the Party Board, the candidates would have been selected through secret voting. In this case, each member of the Central Executive Committee allocates three preferential votes. The second position on the electoral list belongs to the candidate with the highest sum of the preferential votes, and lower positions are distributed accordingly.

The leader is always selected separately. As we have already mentioned, the Party Board proposes its own candidate, and four Regional Executive Committees can add their own nominee. The leader is selected through a separate secret ballot by the Central Executive Committee.

ČSSD fits partially into the second and partially into the third model of candidate selection. The candidates are elected by the members of a relatively large body called the Central Executive Committee. On the other side, a small top decision-making body, the Party Board, plays a crucial role in the process of drafting and adopting the electoral list and the selection of the leader. The Party Board drafts the electoral list, which is already a result of intra-party negotiations and has the backing of key players. The Central Executive Committee usually votes on the electoral list (drafted by the PB) as a whole, which furthermore increases the importance of the Party Board.

We have already specified the obligatory conditions that must be fulfilled by the nominees. According to the Code, a potential candidate should not only fit the legal requirements (clean criminal record, etc.), but s/he is also asked to prove his/her language skills and specify his/her professional skills in some EU policy.⁶³ During the selection process the Party Board and the members of the Central Executive Committee respect a few more informal rules. According to the party official, the electoral list should be regionally balanced, providing an opportunity for nominees from various regions. The party tries to set up an electoral list which is somehow "balanced" in terms of the sex⁶⁴ and age of the candidates. Similarly to other parties (e.g. the Communists), the Czech Social Democrats try to set up a list of candidates whose professional skills reflect the diversity of activities of the European Parliament and its Committees. The party

⁶¹ An interview with a representative of the ČSSD, January 23, 2009.

⁶² Cf. L. Linek and J. Outlý 2005.

⁶³ Rád přípravy na volby do Evropského parlamentu v roce 2009.

⁶⁴ In its statute, the Czech Social Democratic Party committed itself to respect the principle of gender equality in the establishment of the electoral lists.

also takes into account previous experience with EU institutions, the publication activity of the candidates, and of course their political experience.⁶⁵

European party groups or European parties do not formally and explicitly influence the selection process; European-level coordination of the selection of candidates is not even planned for the future. Nevertheless, according to the interviewed party official, there has been some informal influence from the Party of European Socialists (PES). PES has signaled that it appreciates the work of the incumbent MEPs from the Czech Social Democratic Party and indicated its support for their inclusion into the electoral list.

The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM)

In the 2004 elections, the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) gained 6 mandates. The party scored relatively well (compared to its results in the national elections) and became the second largest Czech party in the EP. The party is an unreformed follower of the totalitarian Communist Party of Czechoslovakia with a strong but aging member base. In the 2006 national elections the party gained 12% of the votes, confirming its position as the third largest political party in the Chamber of Deputies. Its position in the second chamber – the Senate – is considerably worse.

The formal procedures used by the party for establishing the electoral list have been specified in the Electoral Regulations for the European Parliament Elections,⁶⁶ and also certain general rules governing the selection of candidates are specified in the Statute of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia.⁶⁷ We will start our analysis with the eligibility criteria for potential candidates, and then we will move to the selection process itself (who selects the candidates and according to which criteria). The party expects the potential candidate to identify himself/herself with the political program of KSČM, contribute to the creation of this program and cooperate with the party.⁶⁸ Formal procedures do not require membership of the Communist party. Non-party candidates and even candidates from other parties are allowed, but the candidate countersigns the cooperation with the KSČM. In fact, the current electoral list of the Communist party includes a few non-partisans and candidates from a different party (Party of Democratic Socialism; Strana demokratického socialismu - SDS). The candidate from SDS figures on the ninth place. The reason behind the inclusion of SDS candidates into the candidate list was “good cooperation between the parties on a local level (within a particular local authority)”.⁶⁹ The party does not require the extract from the crime register – statutory declaration suffices. The eligibility criteria are quite inclusive.

The candidates are proposed by County Committees (there are 86 County Councils in total in the Czech Republic) and occasionally also by Regional Councils. The candidates are proposed by the lowest levels (County Committees) of the party hierarchy. The middle level (regional councils) is virtually skipped (Regional Councils do not assess the potential candidates), and the final candidate list is compiled by the top national body (the Central Committee). The rationale behind this mechanism stems from the character of the European elections: the whole Czech Republic forms a single election district. The potential candidates are proposed by the County

⁶⁵ An interview with a representative of the ČSSD, January 23, 2009.

⁶⁶ Volební řád pro volby do Evropského parlamentu, 2008.

⁶⁷ Stanovy Komunistické strany Čech a Moravy, 2008, available at:
<http://www.kscm.cz/index.asp?thema=2680&category=>

⁶⁸ Interview with a representative of the KSČM, January 13, 2009.

⁶⁹ Interview with a representative of the KSČM, January 13, 2009.

Committees, but the Central Committee recommends concrete candidates for the first two positions on the candidate list in advance. This recommendation was adopted already in June 2008 due to the importance of the top positions on the candidate list.⁷⁰

The communist candidates recruit mostly among party members or non-partisans who have some international connections and experience and who are interested and involved in international (European or bilateral) affairs. The candidates usually have some international experience in business (short-term international attachments) or politics (connections to other European leftist parties or trade unions). Incumbents tend to campaign again.

The electoral list is compiled by the Central Committee which is the top decision-making body of the party, consisting of 97 persons, elected by County Councils and confirmed by the party convention. The Central Committee voted on the electoral list in a special meeting of the committee (September 2008) while using the same formalised procedure as before the 2004 elections. The first two candidates were elected by the members of the Central Committee in two separate ballots. The Central Committee itself adopted its recommendation for the two leading positions in advance of several months. So the election was rather a formality, and the leader was not disputed.

The third and lower positions on the electoral list were assigned through a secret ballot by the members of the Central Committee. Each member of the CC expresses his/her preferences by giving a rating from one to seven points for his/her favourites. The third position on the electoral list belongs to the candidate with the highest sum of points, and lower positions are distributed accordingly.

The very top management of the party (the Executive Committee of the Central Committee) reserves the right to ascertain the "loss of eligibility of a candidate" and to shift the ordering of the candidates in this extraordinary situation. Regarding the question of who selects the candidates, KSČM fits into the third model in the middle of the exclusive-inclusive scale. The Communist candidates for the EP elections are elected by the 97 members of the Central Committee.

The electoral list was compiled through secret voting by the members of the Central Committee. But the Central Committee formalised and adopted criteria for the compilation of the electoral list, so the expected qualities of a good candidate were known in advance. As the criteria was already known, they probably already affected the decisions of the County Committees, with regards to whom to propose as a candidate. In an interview, a party official⁷¹ stressed that a good candidate should first of all have some previous good political experience in local, national or European politics. This is a rather pragmatic measure for ensuring that the candidate has the skills to "comprehensibly and convincingly" present the communist program and policies in public and in the media. The party prefers candidates with a strong personality who are well known to the public. Incumbent MEPs have a good chance of being listed in the top positions.

According to formalised criteria, the candidate should also dispose of expertise in a particular area. The party tried to assemble a list of candidates with differing expertise, covering the whole portfolio of responsibilities (social policy, transport policy, agriculture, etc.). The language

⁷⁰ Volební řád pro volby do Evropského parlamentu, 2008 [Electoral regulations for the European Parliament elections].

⁷¹ Interview with a representative of the KSČM, January 13, 2009.

criteria was also stressed⁷² but in reality, the above mentioned criteria took precedence. There was also an informal recommendation to have a woman among the first three candidates and a person younger than 35 among the first five candidates.

European party groups or European parties did not influence the recent selection process. Today, the Czech Communist party only plans its future membership in the Party of the European Left. Nevertheless, party officials seriously consider the possibility of an intra-European coordination of the selection process (compilation of electoral lists) in the future. The membership of KSČM in the Party of the European Left and the coordination of the selection of candidates through GUE/NGL are both deemed viable options before the next EP election. This (planned) coordination will ensure that GUE/NGL disposes of a wide portfolio of experts and that their MEPs are able to participate in all Parliamentary Committees.

The Association of Independent Candidates and European Democrats (SNK-ED)

The Association of Independent Candidates – European Democrats (SNK-ED) is a small liberal conservative party. In the 2006 elections to the Chamber of Deputies, the party barely exceeded 2% of all votes (5% are required to enter the chamber), and it currently has very few senators. On the plus side, SNK-ED was able to come in third (after the Civic Democrats and the Communists) in the 2004 European Parliament elections and gained as many as 3 MEPs out of a possible 24.

The formal procedures for the selection of candidates and for the establishment of the electoral list are specified only in the statutes of the party.⁷³ There is no special formalised electoral code regulating the preparation for the European Parliament elections. Due to the size of the party and the lack of specific formalised rules, the whole process is governed by informal norms and ad-hoc mechanisms.

The candidature is not restricted to the party members; non-partisans are allowed on the electoral list. The party does not formally prohibit the candidature of members of other parties – such nominees are assessed on an individual basis. According to the statute, the nominees are proposed by the Councils of Area Associations – executive bodies of Area Associations (these are the basic components of the party hierarchy). Subsequently, the nominations are handed over to the Regional Councils. The Regional Councils should, according to the statute, propose potential candidates to the National Council. In reality, all levels of the party hierarchy responsible for the suggestion of candidates (area and regional party bodies) handed over this task to a “special group”. In November 2008, this “special group” (consisting of three high-ranking party members and incumbent MEPs) was authorised to find potential candidates for the European elections and draft an electoral list.⁷⁴

The electoral list is adopted by the highest decision-making body – the National Council.⁷⁵ The statute of the party anticipates that this decision will be made through voting. There are no additional specific rules, and the process of the selection is quite flexible. According to the interviewed party official, the draft electoral list is delivered as a whole, but a discussion on individual candidates is allowed.

⁷² Volební řád pro volby do Evropského parlamentu, 2008.

⁷³ Stanovy politické strany SNK Evropští demokraté, 2007 [Statute of the political party AIC - European Democrats], available at: http://www.snked.cz/files/stanovy_strany/stanovy_snk_ed_finalni_verze_mv.doc.

⁷⁴ Interview with a representative of the SNK-ED, January 28, 2009.

⁷⁵ The process of the selection of the candidates is expected to finish by the end of February.

The process of the nomination and selection of the candidates in SNK-ED is similar to the way the Social Democrats (ČSSD) select their candidates. The nomination of the potential candidates is quite centralised (in the hands of a very small “special group”). The adoption of the final electoral list is a responsibility of the top decision-making body (the National Council). There are no formalised criteria for the candidates. Nevertheless, some informal rules and guidelines specify what the criteria for a good candidate are and how the electoral list should look. The language skills of the candidate are naturally taken into account. The candidates are assessed individually, and the personality of the nominee plays an important role. According to the interviewed official, the party pays great attention to the inclusion of women on the electoral list, even though there are no formal rules regulating this issue.⁷⁶

SNK-ED is a small party, and there are no signs of a European-level coordination of the selection of the candidates.

Conclusion

Of the six political parties included in this study, the most inclusive model of candidate selection is found in the KDU-ČSL, where the delegates to the party convention elect the candidates, followed by KSČM. All the other parties leave the final word to one of the central party organs. The other parties, in particular SZ but also to a lesser extent ODS, have models that despite being largely exclusive give the use of a nomination procedure that to a significant degree restricts the impact of the central party organs in reshaping the list. The ČSSD stands out as having a formalised procedure which is exclusive in its character. Even if local organs of the party are involved in the nomination process, the central organs can nominate their own candidates. SNK-ED is the only party not to have a formalised procedure for the nomination process, which as a consequence is centralised and exclusive.

The parties also differ concerning the demands they put on the candidates. None of the parties explicitly state that party membership is necessary, yet party members are the norm on the ballot lists of all the parties. It is common among the parties to demand prior knowledge of one world language and professional qualifications useful in the EP. SZ is the only party to have specific rules to achieve a gender balance on the ballot list. The European Parties have not in any important way influenced the nomination procedure of any of the parties.

⁷⁶ Interview with a representative of the SNK-ED, January 28, 2009.

DENMARK

Introduction

On 7 June 2009, Denmark will elect 13 representatives to the seventh European Parliament (EP). The Danish parties have during 2008 been recruiting and selecting candidates in order to establish their electoral list before elections.

This research report describes and analyses the procedures applied by Danish political parties when selecting candidates and establishing their electoral lists for EP elections 2009. Furthermore, the study examines Danish political party cooperation at the European level with both European party federations and political groups in the EP.

The report starts out by presenting the Danish party system and providing background information about the Danish parties that are contesting the EP elections. Parties that are currently represented in the Danish Parliament and/or the EP will be the basis for the study. It is important to understand the Danish party system as it has a unique setup due to the euroscepticism that Denmark has experienced during the three decades of EU membership. Moreover, the Danish electoral system and electoral law will briefly be described. This broader context will create the necessary frame for the analysis.

The investigation of procedures on candidate selection has been carried out in two phases. In the first phase all political parties were asked to complete a questionnaire about their formal rules on selection of candidates, the recruitment of candidates, the preparation of candidates, and finally the impact of cooperation with EP party groups or European party federations. The parties were also asked to provide documentation of party rules and statutes. During the second phase semi-structured interviews were carried out with party officials from all the parties included in the report. The interviews were divided into three sets of questions. Firstly, the interviewees were asked to describe the formal procedures to verify the results from the first phase. Secondly, they were asked about the party's informal procedures in order to understand how the formal procedures were carried out in practice. Finally, they were asked to elaborate on their party's cooperation at the European level. A small group of candidates were also interviewed in order to gain their understandings and perspectives on the procedures applied by their party.

The two phases of the research are not being presented separately in the report as they are seen as two sides of the same story.

The Danish party and electoral system

Denmark has a multiparty system with eight parties currently represented in parliament. Denmark's party system is an interesting case as it differs from many other European systems. Due to a 2% threshold which is the lowest in Europe, Denmark has a very large number of parties represented in the Danish parliament compared to its small population of 5.5 million people (Siaroff, 2000: 226-234). Consequently, several parties have similar political profiles as new parties have emerged when internal party disputes occurred. The latest example is the new political party in parliament, the Liberal Alliance, which was formed partly due to

disagreements within the Social Liberal Party. Moreover, Denmark has a tradition for minority governments. Since 1909 no single party has had the majority of parliamentary seats, and most Danish governments have therefore been minority governments consisting of one or more parties (Bille, 2006)

The four oldest and historically most influential parties are the [Conservative People's Party](#) (founded in 1870), the Social Democrats (founded 1871), the [Liberal Party](#) (founded in 1870) and the [Social Liberal Party](#) (founded in 1905). The younger parties are the Socialist People's Party (founded in 1959), the Danish People's Party (founded in 1995) and the Liberal Alliance (founded in 2007 under the name 'New Alliance'). The latter will not be included in the report since it has not yet announced a list of candidates for EP elections. In the following section all parties contesting the EP elections in 2009 will briefly be introduced. Their different attitudes to European integration will also be addressed. The Danes have had to answer 'yes' or 'no' in no less than six EU referenda during the three decades of EU membership. The EU debate has therefore traditionally been reduced to a 'for' or 'against' discussion which is also reflected within the parties.

Political parties contesting EP-elections

The mainstream pro-European parties in Denmark include the Liberal Party, the Conservative People's Party, the Social Liberals and the Social Democrats. *The Liberal Party of Denmark* (Venstre (V)) is currently the leading political party in Denmark with the largest number (46 out of 179) of seats in the Danish parliament. Since 2001 it has maintained a right-wing minority government with the Conservative People's Party with support from the Danish people's party. It was traditionally a party advocating agricultural interests but after the 1960s became reoriented towards a more classical liberal party. The liberal party currently has three Members of the EP (MEPs) and is part of the EP party group Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) and a member of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR).

The Conservative People's Party (Det Konservative Folkeparti (K)) is currently the fifth most important party in Denmark as it has 18 seats in the Danish parliament and received 10.4% of the vote in the 2007 national parliament elections. In the EP, the party has one MEP who is member of the European People's Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED) and the party is also member of the European People's Party.

The Social Liberal Party (Det Radikale Venstre (R)) is a centrist party currently in opposition to the right-wing government coalition with nine seats in parliament after having received 5.1% of the vote. The Social Liberals have the strongest pro-European profile of Danish parties. In the EP, the party has one MEP who is part of the ALDE group and the party is also member of the ELDR.

The Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterne (S)) is the major opposition party and the second most important party with 25.5% of votes and 45 seats in the Danish parliament. Moreover, the party has five MEPs and is thus the best represented Danish party in the EP. The MEPs are member of the Socialist Group in the EP and the party is also member of the Party of European Socialists (PES). The Social Democrats were divided over accession to the EC in 1972, and were pleased to have the issue settled through a referendum. The divisions over European integration have continued to be present within the party after the Danish accession, but the number of eurosceptics within the party has diminished over time. The Social Democrats recommended a 'no' to the Single European Act (SEA) in the 1986 referendum as it was seen as mainly a market liberalisation

project. However, the success of the single market and the new political security situation in Europe after 1989 made the Social Democrats change its discourse to a more pro-integrationist approach and the party recommended a 'yes' in all the following Danish referenda(Haahr, 2000).

The traditional eurosceptical parties in Denmark, the Unity List, the Socialist People's Party and the Danish People's Party, are situated on both the left and right side of the political spectrum. The Unity list does not contest EP elections and is therefore not included in the analysis.

The Socialist People's Party (Socialistisk Folkeparti (SF)) is a left-green political party. It has never formed part of a government. It was originally strongly against European integration, arguing that the EU was a capitalist project against the interests of the working class. But after the Danish electorate voted yes to the SEA against the advice of the Socialist People's Party it no longer advocated for Denmark's withdrawal from the EC. The party was crucial in the 'no' campaign leading to the rejection of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. After the Danish 'no' to the Maastricht Treaty, the party also played a decisive role in negotiating the broad 'national compromise' that paved the way for a second referendum on the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 and the negotiation of four Danish opt-outs in the Edinburgh agreement of 1993 (DIIS, 2008). The second Maastricht referendum is the only referendum in which the party has recommended a 'yes' but only 20% of the party's supporters followed its recommendation (Raunio, 2005). The party has, in recent years, undergone a transformation from having a strong eurosceptic approach towards becoming an EU-supporter. This change of direction can be seen as a result of not wanting to share camp with the nationalist right party, the Danish People's Party, and as way of showing its capability to become a government party (Lauring Knudsen, 2004). The Socialist People's party is still split on issues like joining the euro but cannot anymore be categorised as a merely eurosceptical party. In a 2006 internal party poll 66% of the members declared that the party should recommend a yes in a referendum on the European Constitution. The party is now the fourth largest party in the Danish parliament with 23 seats. The Socialist People's Party has one MEP in the EP and is part of EP party group the Greens. The party is not a full member of the European Green Party but currently has an observer status.

The Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti (DF)) is a fairly young populist right-wing party. With 25 seats in the Danish parliament and 13,8% of votes, the party is the third largest in Denmark. The Danish People's Party's emphasis is on defending Danish sovereignty and culture. The party is not against Danish EU membership per se, but is against supranationalism and argues that integration should not be extended beyond traditional intergovernmental cooperation. The Danish People's Party has, since 2001, been the support party to the centre-right government but the support does not include EU issues. In the Danish parliament, the strongest critics of the EU are now the Danish People's Party who is trying to capture eurosceptic voters with an aggressive anti-EU discourse (Raunio 2005, Lauring Knudsen 2004). The Danish People's Party has one MEP and is part of EP party group the Union for Europe of the Nations.

A separate party system for EP elections

Danish EP elections differ from EP elections in most other EU countries as Denmark is one of the only member states where a separate party system for EP elections has emerged. This particular system expresses itself with two parties that do not contest national parliament elections and hence only submit lists of candidates for EP elections, namely the People's movement against the EU and the June Movement. They both define themselves explicitly as movements rather

than as parties. The existence of the two movements is a result of the euroscepticism that Denmark has experienced since its accession to the European community.

The People's movement against the EU (Folkebevægelsen mod EU (N)) is an anti-EU political organization which was established just before the EC referendum on Danish membership in 1972 as a cross-party platform for the no-campaign. The primary objective of the movement is to withdraw Denmark from the EU. In the 2004 EP election it gained 5.2% of the votes and was thus able to elect one MEP by gaining benefit from an electoral pact with the June Movement. It is currently part of the Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) EP party group. The movement claims to be a cross-party organisation but a majority of its members belong to the left of the political spectrum. The current MEP of the movement is from the Unity List and this is probably why they do not contest EP elections. The movement split into two after the Maastricht referendum in 1992 and a new movement was founded.

The June movement (Junibevægelsen (J)) is also a eurosceptic political organisation that claims to be politically neither left nor right. The name of the movement comes from the referendum that took place in Denmark in June 1992 and its initial goal was to prevent a second referendum. The June Movement differs from the People's movement against the EU as it accepts Denmark's membership of the EU, but opposes any further European integration and has thus adopted a softer version of euroscepticism. The success of the June movement is mainly due to the personal engagement of the leader, Jens-Peter Bonde's, who has been an MEP since 1979. In the 2004 EP election the movement gained 9.1% of the national vote and re-elected Jens-Peter Bonde. The movement is part of the Independence/Democracy Group (IND/DEM) in the EP. Jens-Peter Bonde resigned as an MEP in May 2008 and the June movement is thus likely to lose many votes in the 2009 elections. After Jens-Peter Bonde's resignation he has become a political advisor for the new pan-European political party, Libertas. Both movements saw their votes share decline sharply in the 2004 elections (Raunio, 2005). The June movement will unfortunately not be included in the report as the movement did not have the capacity or time to participate.

	Total votes EP 2004	No of MEPs won, 2004	% of total votes in EP 2004	Change % EP 2004 – EP 1999	% of total in 2001 national election	% change EP 2004 – national 2001
Social Democratic Party	618,412	5	32.6	+16.1	29.1	+ 3.5
Social-Liberal Party	120,473	1	6.4	-2.7	5.2	+ 1.2
Conservative People's Party	214,972	1	11.3	+2.8	9.1	+ 2.2
Socialist People's Party	150,766	1	7.9	+0.8	6.4	+ 1.5
June Movement	171,927	1	9.1	-7.0	n/a	n/a
People's Movement	97,986	1	5.2	-2.1	n/a	n/a
Danish People's Party	128,789	1	6.8	+1.0	12.0	- 5.2
Liberal Party	366,735	3	19.4	-4.0	31.2	-11.8

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Health, 'Europa-Parlamentsvalget 13. juni 2004 Landsresultat', (available at: <http://www.ism.dk/publikationer/res13juni2004/la000.htm>)

Results of EP election 2004 in Denmark

The electoral system in Denmark

Before explaining the procedures of candidate selection applied by the above mentioned political parties, it is important to lay out the electoral rules governing the EP elections in Denmark and thus also the framework for the procedures of the parties. In Denmark the whole country forms one single electoral district from which the 13 members of the European Parliament (MEPs) will be elected. Only political parties and political organizations may submit nominations. Parties represented in the Danish parliament or the EP are entitled to submit lists of candidates. The lists must be registered with the Ministry of Welfare four weeks before election day. Lists submitted by other parties must be supported by electors numbering at least 2% of valid votes cast at the last election. When registering the list, the new party needs to hand in declarations of support from 2% of voters in order to be approved for EP elections. The approval last for three years. New party lists must be submitted eight weeks before election day.

The electoral list of a party may consist of a maximum of 20 candidates. The parties can either establish the list ranking the candidates or have the candidates listed as equally ranked. In practice a majority of Danish parties present a prioritised list of candidates on the ballot paper but the candidates are registered as equally ranked meaning that the party ranking of the electoral list can be altered by the number of personal votes.⁷⁷

Voters have one vote which they can give either to a list as a whole or to a candidate of their choice on the list. During counting, all votes cast for candidates and lists are added together. Seats are allocated to the different party lists using the d'Hondt method (Elklit, 2005). There is a provision for the Danish Parliament to verify the election result that has been presented by the Ministry of Welfare.

The d'Hondt method slightly favours large parties over small parties. There is a tendency that bigger parties systematically get a bigger share of mandates than they would have received if the distribution was done according to the largest remainder method (Elklit, 2005). To counterbalance the advantages for bigger parties and to avoid wasting any votes, the parties have the opportunity to form electoral pacts with each other. All electoral pacts must be registered before 10 May 2009 at the Ministry of Welfare. In previous elections many parties have benefitted from their electoral pacts. The best way of gaining the maximum from an electoral pact is to form coalition with a party smaller than you. Forming electoral pacts is therefore a strategic consideration as much a political decision.

At the 2004 EP elections the following electoral pacts were established:

- Social democrats with Socialist People's party
- the Social Liberals with the Christian Democrats
- the Conservative People's Party with the Liberal Party
- June movement with the People's movement against the EU (The latter achieved one mandate due to the electoral pact)

The Danish parties commented that the electoral pacts were expected to be even more crucial for the 2009 elections since it is likely that one or more Danish parties will lose their seats in the European Parliament when the Danish number of MEPs will go down from 14 to 13.

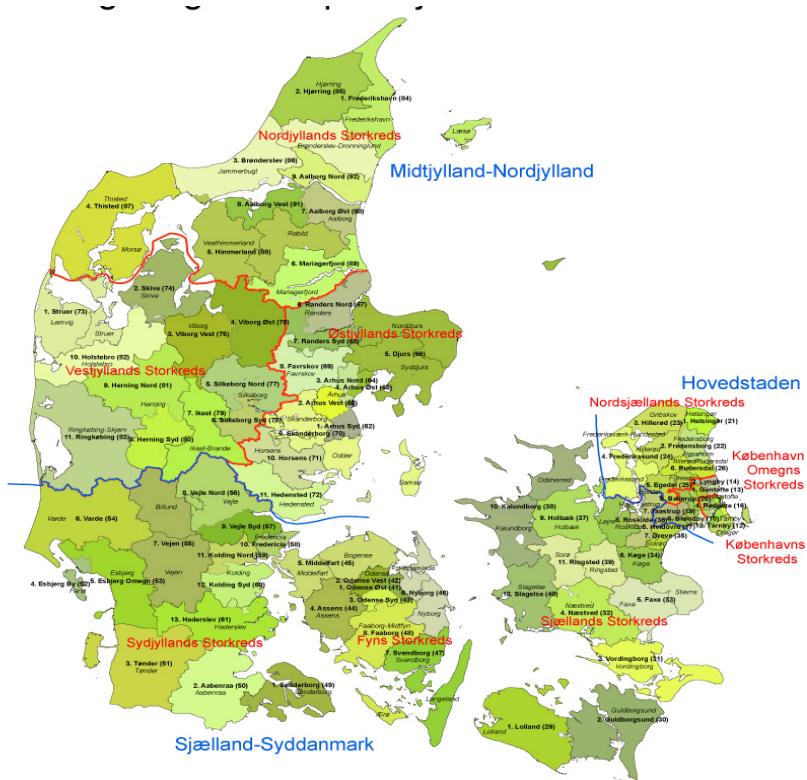
⁷⁷ Danish electoral law nr. 584 from June 23, 2008, available at:
<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=120389>

Procedures of candidate selection

Candidate selection is subject to both formal party rules and informal practices. The analysis of party procedures on selecting candidates thus takes into account both aspects by analysing formal party statutes as well as informal procedures through interviews with party officials and candidates. Interviews with party officials from all the parties have been carried out (see interview list in annex 1). In this section, an examination of the selection of candidates of each party will be carried out and concluded with general observations about the procedures applied by Danish parties, including differences and similarities.

In order to understand the different selection procedures, it is also necessary to know how the parties are organised. A new municipal reform entered into force on 1 January 2007. Before the reform Denmark consisted of 14 counties and 271 municipalities. Denmark is now divided into 5 regions and 98 municipalities. The reform also meant the introduction of new and larger constituencies. In national elections candidates and votes are now distributed in 10 large constituencies (storkredse) and 92 local constituencies and thus reflect the new borders of the regions and municipalities.

Danish constituencies as of 1 January 2007



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Health (available at: <http://www.dr.dk/NR/rdonlyres/4F80D718-C54C-439E-B2CF-06F0680EAA55/636346/Valgkredse.jpg>)

Danish parties have also undergone a change in their internal organization to adjust to the new divisions. None of the Danish parties have exactly the same organisation. However, it is common for a party to have:

- an annual party conference which approves manifestos and elects a party chairperson (the highest authority of the party);
- a party board of leaders;
- a number of regional organisations (either according to the number of regions (5) or large constituencies (10)) and a number of local branches with their own organisation.

Conservative People's Party

The electoral list of 13 candidates was established by the party conference in September 2008. After the conference the party presented a prioritised candidate list which will be registered as an equally ranked list. Prior to the party election of candidates, the 10 large constituency organisations nominate candidates. The youth organisation of the party, Konservativa Ungdom, also nominates a candidate. After the nominations, the party board appoints a candidate committee which decides the ranking of the electoral list. If there is a call for voting on the order of the list, this will be carried out during the party conference meeting. No election was held to decide the order of the 2009 list and thus the main board accepted the list as proposed by the candidate committee. The procedures applied by the Conservative People's Party were thus largely centralised but with local nominations.

Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti)

The electoral list of 10 candidates was established on 31 January 2009 at a separate selection meeting on the 2009 EP election where the party board and the presidents of local party branches were entitled to vote. After the meeting, the party presented a prioritised candidate list but the candidates will be registered as equally ranked. The competition of selecting candidates is played out on a purely national basis and has no regional nominations. The selection of the top candidate was a central decision taken by the party board and published on 10 July 2008. There was no internal competition for the position as the party's top candidate. All in all, the candidate selection of the party was mainly a centralised procedure.

Liberal Party

The electoral list was established at the annual party conference meeting in November 2008 and consists of 14 candidates. The electoral list of the liberals differs from other party lists as the candidates are placed in alphabetical order, except from the top candidate. The majority of candidates are being nominated by the 12 locally appointed European Committees. The youth organization of the party, Venstres Ungdom, also has the right to nominate one candidate. Moreover, the party board appointed a candidate committee in January 2008 with the mandate to nominate the top candidate and the remaining candidates on the list. The nomination of the top candidate had to take place before the party conference and was published on 23 August 2008. If other top candidates are being put forward besides the one nominated by the candidate committee, who has the support of one-third of the party board, an election will take place during the party conference. This was not the case for the selection of the 2009 top candidate. The procedures applied by the Liberal Party were largely centralised but with local nominations.

People's movement against the EU

The movement does not have any formalised rules on the selection of candidates and thus adjusts rules from election to election. There is, however, a tradition for establishing a list with 20 candidates which is the maximum according to Danish election law. The electoral list was established at the national conference in October 2008. Three top candidates were first elected and thereafter the remaining 17 candidates. The list of candidates is being published in a prioritised order but is registered as equally ranked. The reason behind establishing a full list of 20 candidates is that the movement aims at getting a broad cross-party list and tries to recruit candidates from all Danish parties. Getting EU-critical politicians from other parties to stand as EP candidates for the movement is a way of flagging up internal party disputes over European integration. The candidate selection of the movement can be characterised as mainly a centralised procedure.

Social Democrats

The election of candidates took place at the party conference in September 2008 where representatives from the local party organisations, the party board and eight representatives from the youth organisation of the party, Danmarks Socialdemokratisk Ungdom, have the right to vote. The candidate list has a prioritised order but is being registered as an equally-ranked list. The electoral list is established so it ensures regional representation. Each of the five regional party organisations can nominate from one to four candidates depending on the size of the constituency. The Copenhagen area is the largest constituency and can therefore nominate up to four candidates. The top candidate was elected separately by the party conference in September after a recommendation by the party board of June 2008. If there is more than one top candidate, an election will be held at the annual party conference. For the 2009 elections, only one candidate stood for the top position. The remaining nine candidates were placed on the electoral list according to number of votes. The candidate selection procedure was a mixture of local nomination and central selection.

Social Liberals

The electoral list was established at the annual party conference in September 2008 and consists of 13 candidates. The list is prioritised on the ballot paper but is registered as an equally ranked list. According to the party statutes, the electoral list needs to have 15 candidates but due to difficulties in recruiting candidates the 2009 list only has 13. Five candidates are nominated by the party conference and one by each of the 10 large constituency organisations. When the top candidate has been elected separately at the annual party conference the remaining 14 candidates are placed on the list according to number of votes. Four candidates were competing for the top candidate position. At the annual party conference the right to vote is enjoyed by the representatives of the local party branches. The candidate selection of the Social Liberals included local nominations, but also has elements of centralised selection.

Socialist People's Party

The first phase of selecting candidates for EP elections that took place within the party was the selection of the four top candidates on the list. The party has a strong tradition for member's democracy and internal membership ballots when selecting candidates for elections at both the

local, national and European level. Consequently, all members of the party were given the chance to vote for the four top candidates among 12 members either by letter or electronic voting. The four candidates who received a majority of votes were chosen and placed on the electoral list in accordance to number of votes. The result of the ballot was revealed on 25 November 2008. The party's main board will select the remaining candidates on the list (candidate number 6 to 20). The decision of establishing the full list has not been taken at the time of writing. According to party statutes, the youth organisation of the party, Socialistisk Folkepartis Ungdom, selects candidate number 5 on the list. The 2009 candidate from the youth party stood for the election of the four top positions and is now second on the list. Although the internal membership ballot applies when selecting the top candidates on the list, establishing the rest of the list is a central decision taken by the party board but with suggestions from the local party branches or regional organisations. The party registers the candidate list as an equally ranked list. The Socialist People's Party included membership democracy for the selection of top positions, but the selection of the remaining candidates will mainly be a centralised procedure.

General observations

Selecting the top candidate

When comparing the procedures of Danish parties and movements it becomes clear that the main issue at stake is selecting the best top candidate or top candidates. The importance of having strong personal profiles on the top of the list is confirmed when looking at number of personal votes compared to votes for an entire list. Data from the Danish 2004 EP election show that personal votes comprise 82.4 % of all votes.⁷⁸ The most remarkable personal victory in the 2004 EP election is that of Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, former Prime Minister and chairmen of the Social Democrats who won 407.966 personal votes and secured five seats in the EP.

The importance of the top candidate is also reflected in the decision-making process of the Danish parties when selecting the top candidates. All parties take the top candidate decision separately and before establishing the full list of candidates. The name of the top candidate is also published before establishing the complete list of candidates.

In most cases the selection of the top candidate is a top-level and central party decision and the selection is more an appointment than an actual party election. The exception is when there is competition amongst equally qualified candidates (Social Liberals) or in the case where there is a rule of ballot among members (Socialist People's Party). The centralised decision allows for parties to ensure the selection of high profiled and famous candidates or, as in the case of the Social Democrats, reward current MEPs for good parliamentarian performance in the EP.

A decentralised decision for selecting top candidates as in the case of the Socialist People's party also has its advantages. The method of a ballot among members is not only there to secure member participation but is also likely to enhance internal competition for the top positions. The candidates who stand for top candidate election need to prepare internal candidate material before the ballot presenting their candidature for publication and distribution amongst all members of the party. Some candidates prepare additional brochures and election material to raise their profile within the party even though costs for internal campaigning are not covered

⁷⁸The data from the Danish EP-elections in 2004 is available at:
<http://www.im.dk/publikationer/res13juni2004/lp000.htm>

by the party. EP candidates from the party confirmed that the level of internal competition amongst the top candidates is high. Furthermore, the method often provides more publicity in the media during the period of selecting candidates.

The Social Democrats have also used the membership ballot method when electing the president of the party and are considering applying the method for EP candidate selection in order to create more enthusiasm for EP-elections within the party.

Although the current procedures of ballot among members have the potential of enhancing internal competition, the participation rate amongst the members of the Socialist People's Party for the EP candidate selection vote in 2008 was only 15.2% (16,000 members had the chance to vote). The party also sees disadvantages of the procedure because the party loses control over decisions. This means that the leaders of the party do not have the opportunity to reward candidates for good parliamentarian work during their time as either MEPs or MPs. Moreover, it is a risky method when taking into account the nature of EP-elections where the importance of personal profiles is hard to neglect.

Candidate selection also has an important impact on the performance of the parliamentarians after being elected. Research has shown that MEPs from national parties that have a centralised method of candidate selection are more likely to defect from EP party group lines (Faas, 2003). On the contrary, the more decentralised the candidate selection is, the greater is the possibility for MEPs to act as independent politicians who are freer to vote with their EP party group and against their national party. Furthermore, the decentralised method makes it easier for the MEP to follow the preferences of the voters and not only the preferences of party leaders (Hix, 2004).

Establishing the electoral list

When establishing the full list of candidates most parties aim at ensuring regional representation on the list, except from the Danish People's Party. Many parties express difficulties in recruiting candidates from all constituencies and generally find the Copenhagen area as the easiest district for recruitment.

The Conservative People's Party is considering applying a more formal method to the selection procedure by obligating the large constituencies to put forward an EP candidate since the party has experienced problems with finding candidates from each of the 10 large constituencies.

Another important observation is that most parties experience a low level of internal competition when establishing the complete electoral list. The majority of lists are shorter than the maximum of 20 as laid out by Danish election law. Moreover, most parties have a very limited recruitment pool of potential candidates and in several cases only just enough to meet the required number of candidates. This is partly due to the relatively low number of Danish mandates and hence low chances of being elected. Due to the relatively high number of parties, most Danish parties will only get one or two mandates if any. Many candidates on the lists who are not likely to get elected use their candidature as a way of profiling themselves within a certain constituency before local or national elections. Since the majority of candidates on the lists are aware that chances of being elected are very low, there is no really stiff competition between candidates but rather a team spirit and many candidates are standing for elections to support their party and the top candidate.

Both the electoral system of the member state and the party procedures on selecting candidates shape the relationship between candidates and parties. Moreover, in the case of Denmark the large number of parties affects the importance of the top candidate compared to the remaining EP candidates. In the Danish electoral system voters can choose individual candidates which then encourage candidates to gain personal recognition and support among the electorate. But voters can also choose to vote for a party instead of an individual candidate. Candidates thus also have a strong incentive to support their party and its policies in order to increase the overall electoral chances of the party, in order to better their own chances of being elected. Consequently, rivalries between candidates from the same party are less likely and thus few voters are aware of policy differences between candidates (Hix, 2004).

Previous research has suggested that an electoral system with small electoral districts and an open ballot structure provides the best basis for changing the second order nature of EP-elections (Hix, Hagemann 2008). Denmark is one of the member states which have almost the ideal electoral system but this does not seem to solve the problems that some Danish parties experience in terms of low competition and difficulties in recruiting candidates. A majority of Danish parties did not plan to change current practices and procedures and thought that the Danish electoral system provides a good platform for the elections, but as the same time they did not possess in-depth knowledge about other electoral systems or party procedures in other member states.

Composition of the electoral list

When comparing the profiles of the top candidates of the eight parties included in the report, a majority have strong pro-European profiles except from the top candidate of the Danish People's Party, Morten Messerschmidt, and People's movement against the EU, Søren Søndergaard. In the 2004 EP-elections the top candidates of the Socialist People's Party still reflected the internal dispute over European integration as a pro-EU and an anti-EU top candidate were competing (Margrethe Auken versus Pernille Frahm). Today all the four top candidates of the party have pro-EU profiles and instead they differ because each of them emphasise different political issues. The People's movement against the EU has presented a cross-party list but did not manage to recruit many famous politicians from other parties as they have done in previous elections. This shows that the aim of displaying internal party disputes over EU has become more difficult for the movement. This could potentially mean a tendency of moving away from the traditional pro/anti EU debate towards discussions of different attitudes on EU political issues. Only three out of the eight top candidates are veteran MEPs (Margrethe Auken (SF) and Søren Søndergaard (N)). One top candidate is a current MP (Morten Messerschmidt (DF) and one is former leader of his party and former minister (Bendt Bendtsen (K)). Out of the current Danish MEPs, 36% are not running for re-election. This is seen to be the fourth highest percentage in the EU. Denmark therefore expects to see a generational shift in the Danish MEPs. The Social Liberals strongly signals this shift as the party has chosen a young top candidate, Sofie Carsten Nielsen over their current MEP, Johannes Lebech. She has a very pro-European profile and her main political career goal is to become an MEP. Furthermore, the party presents the youngest candidate list with an average age of 36. This is also a result of the general notion within the party of a need for renewal after a period with many internal disputes and declining voter support.

When looking at the total groups of Danish candidates, the electoral lists are composed of 37% female candidates and 63% male candidates. The average age of all Danish EP candidates is 44 (see annex 2). Many parties have no representation at all of ethnic minorities on the list with the

exception of Socialist People's Party, the Social Democrats and the People's movement against the EU.

Preparation and campaigning before elections

The campaigning for the top candidates is in all cases run by the national party secretariat and includes a much larger budget and support than is the case of the remaining candidates. This again confirms the importance of the profiling of the top candidate.

The campaigns for the rest of the candidates are run by the local party branches that each of the candidates stand for and the size of the campaign budgets depend solely on the economy of the local organisation. The budgets differ a lot since the public fund to the local party branches depends on the vote share they achieved in the last national elections. The candidates are likely to have very limited campaign resources this year as Denmark is also holding local elections in November. The local party organisations are likely to be more involved in the local campaigning compared to the EP election campaigning. In general very little support and preparation are provided from the parties to the candidates. A common procedure for all parties is to provide all candidates with a website. Furthermore parties hold media training courses, a study trip to Brussels and prepare material on the overall functioning of the EU.

Cooperation at the European level

All parties included in the report were asked about their cooperation with the EP party group or the European Party Federation on candidate selection and preparation of candidates. Common to all was that the cooperation at the European level had no impact on their internal procedures of candidate selection. The parties explained that one of the reasons was different electoral systems in the member states and hence also different candidate selection procedures applied by national political parties. The Danish parties all had very little knowledge about procedures applied by their sister parties in Europe and sharing best practices is thus not a common procedure.

In the party procedures on preparing candidates for election little cooperation takes place although many candidates will be presented to representatives from the EP party group during the study trip to Brussels that most Danish parties arrange. ELDR also invites a small number of candidates from the Liberal Party and the Social Liberal Party to a preparation seminar.

The Social Democrats and the Socialist People's Party were the parties which showed the highest levels of cooperation with their European partners in the election preparation phase, including the running of campaigns. The Social Democrats cooperates with PES in many aspects of the party's activities. The Social Democrats are very involved in the process of preparing the PES manifesto and this will be linked to the national campaign of the party. The current president of PES is the Danish MEP Poul Nyrup Rasmussen and his involvement has, of course, played a significant role in enhancing cooperation between the Danish Social Democrats and PES. Furthermore, four candidates on the party's EP election list are current MEPs and are already strongly engaged with the Socialist Group in the EP.

The Socialist People's Party is also cooperating with the European Greens in their campaign preparations. The party provides support for its sister parties in the East European countries which have very limited resources for campaigning. The Socialist People's Party's campaign company is also running the transnational campaign for the European Green Party which has meant a lot for enhancing cooperation in the campaign preparations. The Socialist People's Party explained that part of their campaign strategy is to profile their affiliation with the European level by showing that voting for the Socialist People's Party is also voting for something bigger, the Greens.

The remaining Danish parties did not plan to link their national campaigns to the campaigns run by their European party federation or to refer to European party manifestos.

All the parties were also asked how fixed they considered their alignments with the EP party group to be. A majority of parties expressed that their alignments were very fixed and not up for discussion. The Socialist People's Party used to belong to the GUE/NGL group but changed to the Greens after the 2004 elections. In October, the party board decided to stay within the Green Group and thus confirmed that their group affiliation is now fixed. The Conservative People's Party showed their strong affiliation to the EPP-ED by having all candidates sign a written declaration saying that they will join the EPP-ED group if they get elected. Curiously, the Liberal Party in government and the Social Liberal Party in opposition are both members of ALDE and ELDR but none of them are considering alternative affiliations. They do not regard being part the same political group as a problem but neither of them intend to profile their European affiliation in their national campaigns as this might cause confusion amongst voters.

Only the Danish People's Party and the People's movement against the EU voiced the possibility of changing group affiliation after the 2009 elections. Danish People's Party said it was up to the top candidate, Morten Messerschmidt, to decide which group he wanted to be part of. The People's movement against the EU expressed difficulties in finding an appropriate EP party group. The choice of being part of the left alliance was mainly due to the left-wing profile of their current MEP but did not reflect the cross-party profile of the movement. The group affiliation was therefore considered to be mostly a technical necessity rather than a political decision for the movement. The June Movement also ran into trouble when deciding their group affiliation in the EP. The June Movement are in the same group as a number of far-right politicians from for instance Poland and the UK which is quite paradoxical considering that the neutral left/right profile of the movement. The reason why this affiliation is not political suicide for the movement is because many voters are not aware of their party's group affiliation in the EP.

Conclusion

This research project aimed at providing an understanding of the Danish procedures on candidate selection. Furthermore, it examined the cooperation of Danish parties at the European level. These are the main findings of the study:

Denmark has a separate party system for EP elections due to the two EU-critical movements that do not contest national parliament elections but only EP elections and the Unity List that does not contest EP elections. This particular system is a result of the euroscepticism that Denmark has experienced since its accession.

The electoral system of Denmark provides for equal competition among candidates as the established lists can be altered by personal votes. There is a tradition among Danish parties to form electoral pacts in order to create a maximum use of all votes.

In the procedures of candidate selection all Danish parties have a strong emphasis on the top candidate position because of experience and because of the low number of MEPs per high number of parties. Recognition and personal popularity has played a larger role in the outcome of elections than the actual policy stance of candidates. Selecting the top candidate is therefore often a central party decision. Furthermore, the campaign and preparation resources are much larger for the top candidate than for the remaining candidates.

The decision-making processes of candidate selection are not similar across parties. There are both examples of centralised and decentralised decision-making. The centralised version has the advantage of controlling the selection of a top candidate with personal popularity whereas the decentralised method enhances the competition among candidates from the same party.

Although the Danish electoral system allows candidates to enhance their political visibility, which may potentially enhance the voters' interest in EP election, the Danish parties still experience low competition when establishing the complete electoral list and also have difficulties in recruiting candidates. When looking at the composition of the 2009 electoral list there is a majority of pro-European profiles and also many new candidates. Moreover, the top candidates are not only famous faces but also politicians who have been rewarded for good political work on EU issues. The traditional pro/anti EU divide has also decreased. This signals a potential change of EP elections becoming more than just second-order national contests which could also signal a change in the traditional notion of an MEP position as a pre-retirement job towards a recognised individual political career goal.

The cooperation between Danish parties and their European sister parties is general very low and particularly low in the procedures of selecting candidates. This is partly due to the different electoral systems in the member states and lack of knowledge about best practices of sister parties. Those parties who do have some cooperation with the European level in campaign preparations see a potential for saving resources and for a better profiling of their European partners in the national campaign.

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Annex 1: List of interviewees

Name	Party	Date	Position
Niels Kirkegaard	Liberal Party	28 January 2009	Party official
Lars Midtiby	Social Democrats	28 January 2009	Party official
Poul Lindholm	Danish People's Party	2 February 2009	Party official
Jesper Gronenberg	Social Liberals	5 February 2009	Party official
Henrik Weiglin	Conservative People's Party	6 February 2009	Party official
Ib Roslund	People's movement against the EU	9 February 2009	Party official
Thomas Nystrøm	Socialist People's Party	10 February 2009	Party official
Mette Abildgaard	Conservative People's Party	3 February 2009	EP candidate
Emilie Turunen	Socialist People's Party	3 February 2009	EP candidate
Lotte Rod	Social Liberals	3 February 2009	EP-candidate

Annex 2: List of Danish EP candidates – age and gender composition

Name of candidate	Gender	Age
Conservative People's Party		
1.Bendt Bendtsen	M	54
2. Chr. Wedell Nedergaard	M	52
3. Pernille Høxbro	F	48
4. Mette Abildgaard	F	20
5. Tove Videbæk	F	62
6. Peter Norsk	M	55
7. Thomas Krarup	M	33
8. Jan Købke	M	53
9. Julie Broe	F	26
10. Lone Myrvick	F	50
11. Michael Christensen	M	31
12. Karsten Skawbo- Jensen	M	48
13. Ole Brøkner	M	63
Average age	46	
Gender composition	Male: 62%	Female: 38%
Danish People's Party		
1.Morten Messerschmidt	M	28
2. Kenneth Kristensen	M	31
3. Anna Rosbach	F	61
4. Dennis Flydtkjær	M	30
5. Rikke Karlsson	F	43
6. Aia Fog	F	41
7. Jette Plesner Dali	F	60
8. Bente Kronborg Holst Flensted	F	26
9. Henrik Ræder Clausen	M	45
10.Jeppe Nicolai Jacobsen	M	20
Average age	38,5	
Gender composition	Male: 50%	Female: 50%
Liberal Party		
1. Jens Rohde	M	38
2. Charlotte Antonsen	F	50
3. Poul Dahl	M	64
4. Hans Jørgen Dalum	M	58
5. Kasper Elbjørn	M	35
6. Louise Feilberg	F	32
7. Poul F. Hansen	M	59
8. Anne E. Jensen	F	57
9. Bent Claudi Lassen	M	63
10.Jens-Kristian Lütken	M	27
11. Morten Løkkegaard	M	44
12. Hanne Severinsen	F	65
13. Ole B. Sørensen	M	40
14. Jan Winther	M	27
Average age	47	
Gender composition	Male: 71%	Female: 29%
People's movement against the EU		
1. Søren Søndergaard	M	53
2. Ditte Staun	F	32
3. Rina Ronja Kari	F	23
4. Karina Rohr Sørensen	F	33
5. Christian Juhl	M	55
6. Kirsten Annette Christensen	F	-
7. Mehmet Aksoy	M	44
8. Hans Henrik Larsen	M	54

9. Sven Skovmand	M	72
10. Steen Horst	M	58
11. Ole Nors Nielsen	M	50
12. Helge Rørtuft-Madsen	M	64
13. Jørgen Grøn	M	60
14. Jaleh Tavakoli	F	26
15. Thorkil Sohn	M	58
16. Søren Kolstrup	M	-
17. Povl Kristensen	M	51
18. Johanne Langdal Kristiansen	F	23
19. Keld Hvalsø Nedergaard	M	-
20. Ebba Bigler	F	64
Average age	48	
Gender composition	Male: 65%	Female: 35%
Social Democrats		
1. Dan Jørgensen	M	33
2. Britta Thomsen	F	54
3. Christel Schaldemose	F	41
4. Ole Christensen	M	53
5. Claus Larsen-Jensen	M	55
6. Hüseyin Arac	M	-
7. Malou Lunderød	F	21
8. Einer Lydach	M	57
9. Mikkel Schøler	M	27
10. Henning A. Jensen	M	57
Average age	44	
Gender composition	Male: 70 %	Female: 30 %
Social Liberals		
1. Sofie Carsten Nielsen	F	33
2. Johannes Lebech	M	60
3. Lotte Rod	F	23
4. Anna Allerslev	F	24
5. Stefan Seidler	M	28
6. Kristina Siig	F	38
7. Jakob Erle	M	58
8. Anne Elizabeth Kamstrup	F	23
9. Christian Høgedal Kjølhede	M	19
10. Claus Brandt Rasmussen	M	31
11. Birger Nissen	M	62
12. Morten Kirk Jensen	M	35
Average age	36	
Gender composition	Male: 58%	Female: 42%
Socialist People's Party⁷⁹		
1. Margrethe Auken	F	64
2. Emilie Turunen	F	24
3. Fathi El-Abed	M	41
4. Ole Riisgaard	M	42
Average age	43	
Gender composition	Male 50%	Female 50%

Average age of total list: 44

⁷⁹ The full list of EP candidates has not yet been established.

GERMANY

Introduction

This study analyses the procedures of German political parties for selecting their candidates for the European elections 2009 and establishing the respective electoral lists. It examines only those German political parties, which are represented in the European Parliament. Parties having won less than 2% of the popular vote in the last European or national elections are therefore not included. The study examines the party statutes, rules of procedures, and the impact of relevant legislation. It is also based on empirical analysis by means of interviews, observations at party conventions or delegate assemblies, and information via informal channels.

The selection and fielding of German candidates for the election to the European Parliament and the establishing of the final electoral lists have their basis in European primary law (Art.189, Art.190), the Declaration (20) adopted by the Nice Intergovernmental Conference, and in German laws. While the "Treaty on the European Union" (2002) defines the number of German candidates with 99, German law gives precise rules of selection, election and fielding of those candidates. Important pieces of national legislation in this context are the German Basic Law, the European Elections Act (*Europawahlgesetz*), and the European Electoral Regulations (*Europäische Wahlordnung*). In general, German Party law is very detailed in comparison to other democratic systems – a fact that needs to be seen *inter alia* in the light of the post World-War-II years, when especially the allied side was keen on taking strict measures to commit political parties to the principles of a free democratic basic order.

Especially the German Basic Law shows the great importance that is placed on political parties in the German political system, by positioning the article on parties quasi directly after the fundamental rights (Art. 1-19) [see Annex].

Parties in Germany and the selecting of candidates

CDU - Christlich Demokratische Union

The Christian Democratic Party is the only German Party, which does not enter into the EP election campaign with a nation-wide electoral list, but with separate Länder lists. It decided for this option out of several reasons. One of these is the existence of the sister party Christian Social Union (CSU) in Bavaria, which runs during election campaigning with a separate list.

Party Statute

a.) National level

With reference to the German European Election Act (EuWG) the CDU party statute makes it in principle possible to have a nation-wide as well as separate Länder lists. The decision for one of these two options needs to be taken by the federal executive board.⁸⁰ Nation-wide or Länder lists need to follow certain gender aspects. Article 15 of the CDU party statute requires a

⁸⁰ Statute of the CDU, as per: 04.12.2007, p.16, §20,3.

women-quorum⁸¹ - every third place on the electoral list for the national parliament as well as for the European Parliament needs to be reserved for a woman.

The CDU has chosen to run for elections with lists on the Länder level. Thus, the federal executive committee formally has no say in the selection and fielding of candidates. Provisions given by the party statute do mainly have a declaratory character.⁸² Given the fact that the federal executive committee cannot formally influence the process, the executive committees on Länder levels as well as the regulations set by the party statutes of the CDU Länder organisations play an important role.

b.) Länder level

Party statutes on Länder level govern the exact procedures. They do not only prescribe the way of the actual voting for the candidates and their potential replacements,⁸³ but also explain the way of setting up the Länder assembly of delegates. All these procedures have to follow the German Party Law and the European Election Law, which call for an internal democratic organization of German parties and for transparency in all decision-making.

The Assembly of Delegates: The Länder assembly of delegates is especially held for the election of candidates for the European elections. This assembly consists of delegates of the different districts to be found in the Länder.⁸⁴ Mostly, the allocation of places in this convening happens in the same way: For every 50 members, the districts nominate one delegate. The delegate needs to be an active member of the district. Some Länder, such as Niedersachsen have a fixed number of delegates in the Länder assembly of delegates. Places are allocated according to the d'Hondt method.⁸⁵ In other Länder, the total delegates' number depends upon membership figures.⁸⁶

Land	Number of delegates	Method of allocation
Baden-Württemberg	Not fixed	For every 250 members in a district one delegate
Bayern	-	-
Berlin	Not fixed	For every 50 members in a district one delegate
Brandenburg	120	D'Hondt method
Bremen	120	
Hamburg		according to the seize of the district chapter ⁸⁷
Hessen ⁸⁸	Not fixed	For every 150 members one delegate.
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Not fixed	For every 50 members in a district one delegate
Niedersachsen	120	D'Hondt method
Nordrhein-Westfalen	250	D'Hondt method (with each district chapter having one Basis mandate (Grundmandat))
Rheinland-Pfalz	300	According to membership figures
Saarland		
Sachsen	Not fixed	D'Hondt method
Sachsen-Anhalt	100	Haare-Niemeyer method

⁸¹ Statute of the CDU, as per: 04.12.2007, p.11, §15,4.

⁸² Interview in the Bundesgeschäftsstelle CDU 24.11.2008. / Statute of the CDU, as per: 04.12.2007, p.23, §34,6.

⁸³ E.g. Statute of the CDU Landesverband Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, as per: November 2001, p.29 §2,3.

⁸⁴ See for example: Statute of the CDU Landesverband Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, as per: November 2001,p.28.

⁸⁵ Statute of the CDU in Niedersachsen und des Landesverbandes Hannover, as per: 01.07.2008, p.17.

⁸⁶ Statute of the CDU Landesverband Rheinland-Pfalz, as per: May 2007, p.24.

⁸⁷ CDU Landesverband Hamburg, as per: 2008, „Die Ortsverbände entsenden ihrer Größe entsprechend Delegierte“ (http://www.cduhamburg.de/27002/Uploaded/2008_aufbau-cduhh.pdf).

⁸⁸ The CDU Landesverband Hessen does not call a separate state assembly of delegates for the election of the candidates for the European Elections but uses therefore the forum of the party congress (*Landesparteitag*).

Schleswig-Holstein		For every 100 members one delegate
Thüringen	Not fixed	For every 100 members one delegate

Table 1: Allocation of places in the Länder assembly of delegates

The main task of the Länder assemblies of delegates is the secret ballot of the candidates and their substitutes for the elections to the European Parliament. Not only the election of the candidates as such, but also their order on the electoral list is happening in a secret ballot according to §9 (2) EuWG.⁸⁹ The executive committee on Länder level decides on whether the election of the candidates happens en bloc or whether every candidate is voted for separately and chronologically. Only the actual votes are relevant, abstention from voting and invalid votes do not count. So it happens that candidates receive 100% of the votes, as it was the case for example for the top candidate in Schleswig-Holstein, Reimer Böge.⁹⁰ It is possible for the executive committee on the Länder level to make recommendations to the assembly concerning the appropriate candidates. This right might be optional as it is the case for the CDU Berlin,⁹¹ or it might be obligatory, as it is the case for the CDU Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.⁹² Furthermore, in most Länder such as Mecklenburg-Vorpommern or Baden-Württemberg,⁹³ not only the executive committee on the Länder level, but also each delegate in the Länder assembly of delegates has the right to (orally)⁹⁴ suggest candidates for the electoral list during the convening. Moreover, some Länder do have a so-called complemented right to suggesting candidates' lists (*Ergänzendes Vorschlagsrecht für Kandidatenlisten*).⁹⁵ This means that 15% of the regular delegates with voting power can put forward a candidates' list⁹⁶ two weeks before the actual Länder assembly of delegates takes place.

Sequencing: Party statutes as such do not always codify the actual order on the electoral list. Yet, most Länder follow the same procedure⁹⁷ by applying a regional proportional representation (*Regionalproporz*): That is why the district with the highest number of members generally has the first say for positioning its candidate. For the case of Baden-Württemberg it is e.g. Stuttgart, which suggests the first candidate on the list. By applying a regional proportional representation the order on the electoral list is roughly already set in advance, as the executive committee has to respect a fair social and regional balance.⁹⁸ However, the actual number of candidates from one Land, who finally may join as MEPs the European Parliament, is subject to highly sensitive negotiations between the CDU federal executive committee and the Länder executive committees in the light of the EP-election results. This is because Länder with a large population traditionally are claiming to have more candidates and finally more seats in the EPP group than Länder with a smaller population. Thus, the CDU federal executive committee needs to find a

⁸⁹ see for example: Statute of the CDU Landesverband Mecklenburg-Vorpommern or Berlin.

⁹⁰ interview with CDU Schleswig-Holstein 25.11.2008.

⁹¹ Statute of the CDU Landesverband Berlin, as per: 12 May 2007, p.43 "§5,2: *Der Landesvorstand kann der Landesvertreterversammlung einen Vorschlag für die Besetzung der Länderliste als Empfehlung unterbreiten*".

⁹² Statute of the CDU Landesverband Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, as per: November 2001, p.29: „§2,2: *Der Landesvorstand hat der Landesvertreterversammlung einen Vorschlag für die Besetzung der Landesliste als Empfehlung vorzulegen. Außerdem unterrichtet er die Landesvertreter über weitere eingegangene Vorschläge*“.

⁹³ Party Statute of the CDU Landesverband Baden-Württemberg, as per: 01.01.2007, p.37: „*Das uneingeschränkte Vorschlagsrecht jedes Mitglieds muss für jeden Platz der aufzustellenden Liste gewährleistet sein*“.

⁹⁴ Statute of the CDU Landesverband Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, as per: November 2001, p.29.

⁹⁵ Statute of the CDU Landesverband Hessen, as per: §63,3 p.22

⁹⁶ Statute of the CDU Landesverband Hessen, as per: §63,3 p.22

⁹⁷ interview in the Bundesgeschäftsstelle 24.11.2008.

⁹⁸ Statute of the CDU Landesverband Nordrhein-Westfalen, as per: 01.05.2004, p.40: „*Der Landesvorstand hat bei seinem Vorschlag auf die regionale und soziologische Ausgewogenheit zu achten*“.

good balance between smaller and larger Länders. The executive committee on Länder level enjoys the right to suggest a top candidate for the first place on the list. The districts suggest the other candidates. They nominate the candidates for their entitled place on the Länder list.⁹⁹ In general, this entitled place will be selected by the executive committee according to the d'Hondt method and to the results of the last elections.¹⁰⁰ These procedures allow for a decentralized finding of candidates and more closeness to citizens (*Bürgernähe*). The CDU applies Länder electoral lists to find regional politicians with a close link to the citizens of a region.¹⁰¹

During the Länder assembly of delegates the different suggestions for the sequence of candidates on the electoral lists will be voted for separately.¹⁰² Either the candidates on the distinct lists will be voted for en bloc, if there is no counter-proposal,¹⁰³ or they will be voted for separately until the list is completed.¹⁰⁴ It might be possible for one candidate to run for elections for several places on the lists. S/he will be elected for the highest place for which s/he has accumulated the majority of votes.¹⁰⁵ Counter-proposals necessitate separate votes. Run-off ballots are possible, and require only a normal majority. If the second ballot is tied, places are decided upon drawing lots.

Länder	Vote en bloc	Separate vote
Baden-Württemberg	x	
Bayern	-	
Berlin		x
Brandenburg	x	
Hessen	x	
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern		x ¹⁰⁶
Nordrhein-Westfalen	x	
Sachsen	x	
Sachsen-Anhalt	x	and / or (x)
Schleswig-Holstein	x ¹⁰⁷	
Thüringen	x	x ¹⁰⁸
Saarland	x	
Other Länder ¹⁰⁹	x	x

Table 2: Voting procedures for the candidates' lists

Joint Länder lists (Verbundene Länderlisten)

According to the statements of CDU politicians, it is possible for several Länder associations to combine their electoral lists so as to have a joint Länder list.¹¹⁰ A joint list allows for two or more

⁹⁹ Statute of the CDU Baden-Württemberg as per: 01.01.2007, p.37: "Für die Aufstellung einer Landesliste üben die Bezirksvertreterversammlungen jeweils für die ihrem Bezirksverband zustehenden Listenplätze das Vorschlagsrecht aus".

¹⁰⁰ Statute of the CDU Baden.-Württemberg, as per: 01.01.2008, p. 38

¹⁰¹ interview in the Bundesgeschäftsstelle 24.11.2008.

¹⁰² Statute of the CDU Brandenburg, as per: 01.01.2007, p.33, Statute of the CDU Hessen, §66,6, p. 23

¹⁰³ Statute of the CDU Brandenburg, as per: 01.01.2007, p.33

¹⁰⁴ Statute of the CDU Brandenburg, as per: 01.01.2007, p.33

¹⁰⁵ Statute of the CDU Landesverband Hessen/ Sachsen, as per: 05.2008 §66,6, p.23

¹⁰⁶ Statute of the CDU Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, p.30, §2. "Die gleichzeitige Wahl für mehrere Listenplätze ist nur zulässig, wenn sich vorab auf Befragung durch den Leiter der Versammlung kein Widerspruch erhebt".

¹⁰⁷ Statute of the CDU Schleswig-Holstein as per: 14.06.2003, §65,3 ,p.42.

¹⁰⁸ Statute of the CDU Thüringen, § 51, 7 (<http://cdu-thueringen.de/Satzung.21.0.html>). The first four candidates are voted for separately

¹⁰⁹ The Länder Bremen, Hamburg, Niedersachsen, Rheinland-Pfalz have flexible methods, which had been used on an ad-hoc basis. No detailed information could be obtained on the precise voting procedure.

¹¹⁰ interview in the Bundesgeschäftsstelle 24.11.2008.

Länder to combine their lists and go into the election with only one list, which is voted for in each of those Länder. This possibility is especially interesting for parties of small Länder who otherwise might fear not receiving enough votes to get at least their top-candidate into the European Parliament. Through this procedure, it is possible to position the top candidate in a good place of the joint list, thereby enhancing his/her possibility to join the European Parliament.

Informal procedures

As already elaborated, the fielding of candidates is a matter of the district and their final election a matter of the Länder assemblies of delegates. Hence it is a very decentralized way of finding the candidates. The federal executive committee formally keeps silent during the selection process. However, indirectly - during phone calls or private talks - the federal executive committee recommended to consider certain candidates, it would like to see on the electoral lists. This took the form of suggesting to put the top-candidate of the German CDU as such, Gerd Pöttering, on the top position of all lists. Yet, this was a recommendation only, as a member of the CDU emphasized during an interview.¹¹¹ The executive committees on the Länder level do not need to follow such suggestions. Furthermore, politicians confirmed, that there exists some kind of indirect seniority principle, and candidates, already members of the European Parliament do of course have a certain advantage when entering into the election process. So, for example, out of eight candidates of the CDU in Baden-Württemberg six run for becoming re-elected in 2009.

Influence from the European level

All in all, one can observe that the CDU opts for a rather decentralized process of finding and electing the candidates for the European elections. The Länder organisations do have the most say in this process. The influence from the national level is marginal but existing and from the European level in general non-existent. However, Hans-Gert Pöttering is president of the European Parliament and the federal executive board takes this fact into consideration.

Land	Date
Baden-Württemberg	18.10.2008
Bayern	17.01.2009
Berlin	22.11.2008
Brandenburg	17.11.2008
Bremen	07.11.2008
Hamburg	28.11.2008
Hessen	14.03.2009
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	06.12.2008
Niedersachsen	17.01.2009
Nordrhein-Westfalen	05.12.2008
Rheinland-Pfalz	15.11.2008
Saarland	12.03.2008
Sachsen	17.01.2009
Sachsen-Anhalt	14.02.2009
Schleswig-Holstein	01.11.2008
Thüringen	14.03.2008

Table 3: Dates of Länder assemblies

¹¹¹ interview in the Bundesgeschäftsstelle 24.11.2008.

CSU - Christlich-Soziale Union

The Christian Social Union is the sister party of the Christian Democratic Union. It is an exclusively Bavarian Party, which only runs for the European elections in the Freistaat Bavaria. This constitutes a CSU-specific hurdle for the party, as it is necessary for a party to gain 5% of the overall votes in Germany in order to join the European Parliament.

Party Statute

The CSU convention for the European election is an assembly of delegates, which consists of the members of the Länder executive committee (*Präsidium & Landesvorstand*) and the chairmen of the districts and 300 delegates, elected by the district delegates' assemblies.¹¹² The number of delegates of each district is calculated according to the percentage of votes given to the CSU district in relation to the overall number of votes given to the CSU in whole Bavaria during the last European elections.¹¹³

During the Länder assembly (17 January 2009) the CSU voted for an electoral list, consisting of 41 candidates. Each candidate had to present him/herself before the voting procedure had been conducted. Places 1 – 11 had been voted for separately. Places 12 to 17 and 18 to 41 had been voted en bloc. If a delegate disagrees with certain list places, s/he can also vote for these places separately (*verbundene Einzelwahl*).¹¹⁴ If two candidates run for the same place on a list, the candidate, who attracts most of the votes gets the place. The defeated candidate is then allowed to run for a lower list's place again. This was the case with Dr. Gabriele Stauner positioned on the 5th place, who then had to run for place 9, which she finally obtained. The top candidate, Markus Ferber, was suggested by the party leader Horst Seehofer and got the backing of the party with 96,45% of the votes.

Sequencing

The sequencing of candidates on the CSU electoral list is influenced by several factors: Firstly, all four ethnic groups (Schwaben, Altbayern, Franken and Sudetendeutsche) need to be represented in the list. Secondly, regional proportioning, a fair distribution of qualifications, social strata, as well as gender aspects are important. Thirdly, the party tries to choose candidates who are familiar with different policy areas. That is why, for example, the party decides for politicians in the area of social policy, economic policy, and environmental or agricultural policy.¹¹⁵ A final criterion is to look for CSU candidates who have already gained some political experience, weight or reputation within the EPP group in the European Parliament. This is another factor that might influence the decision for or against a candidate. However, as party members confirmed during interviews, hardly any influence from the EPP parliamentary group or the *European Peoples Party* onto the CSU concerning the selecting of candidates for the EP-elections can be detected.

¹¹² Statute of the Christian Social Union: CSU näher am Menschen : Satzung – Beitragsordnung – Schiedsgerichtsordnung – Parteigesetz, October 2008

(http://www.csu.de/dateien/partei/partei/satzung/080718_satzung.pdf), §30,1, p. 24.

¹¹³ Statute of the Christian Social Union: CSU näher am Menschen : Satzung – Beitragsordnung – Schiedsgerichtsordnung – Parteigesetz, as per: October 2008

(http://www.csu.de/dateien/partei/partei/satzung/080718_satzung.pdf), §30,2 p. 24/25: „Den Kreisverbänden stehen jeweils so viele Delegierte zu, als sich aus dem prozentualen Verhältnis der im Gebiet des Kreisverbandes zu den in Bayern für die CSU abgegebenen Stimmen der vorhergehenden Europawahl errechnen.“

¹¹⁴ Telephone interview with the CSU Mitgliedervertretung in Munich, 20th January 2009.

¹¹⁵ Telephone interview with the CSU Mitgliedervertretung in Munich, 20th January 2009.

SPD - Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands

The current practices of selecting and fielding candidates are mainly based on the "Hamburg Programme", which was concluded at the SPD party meeting in Hamburg in October 2007 and revised the "Bochum Programme" (2003).¹¹⁶ It changed the SPD electoral list for the European elections in 2009 from Länderer lists i.e. electoral lists on the Länder level to a nation-wide electoral list.¹¹⁷ The nation-wide list is finally published the sixty-sixth day before the election.

Party Statute

According to § 29 (2) of the SPD party statute, the party council (*Parteirat*) is entitled to be heard prior to the decisions made by the federal executive committee regarding the preparations of the elections for the Bundestag and the European Parliament.¹¹⁸

The party council, which may be described as a "small party convention" is composed of 110 delegates from the regional sections as well as consultative members, who represent the SPD groups in the Bundestag, social democratic led Länder, and members of the European Parliament.

Article § 29 (2) does not explicitly entitle the party council to select and field the candidates for the European elections. In any case, the federal executive committee has a say in the fielding of top-candidates.¹¹⁹ The chapter 'ballot rules and regulations' of the SPD party statute lays out that the fielding of candidates for the elections should comply with the Election Law and the internal organizational policy of the SPD.¹²⁰ Applicable to the fielding of candidates is § 4 (3) of the 'ballot rules and regulations'. The party statute contains a gender quorum for the lists for the European elections. The fielding of candidates for the European elections is alternating, following gender aspects (man, woman, man, woman etc.), starting with the top-candidate Martin Schulz. Every fifth list position is open either to a woman or a man. Among the first 28 list positions for the European elections, all Länder associations¹²¹ should be taken into account. The actual sequencing on the electoral list reflects the number of party members and the population in the Länder, but also the results of the previous elections.¹²²

The final fielding of candidates took place at the SPD party convention for the European elections on 8th December 2008, which was exclusively held for this purpose. Prior to the convention, delegates were elected at local and regional-level at party conventions for the federal party convention. This multi-level process has two advantages: Firstly, on each level of the party organization there is a necessity to elect delegates for the federal party convention on the European elections and to elect the top-candidates on Länder level. Due to this bottom-up approach there is an unbroken chain of legitimization. Secondly, the seniority principle also called 'rule of seniority' is formally not relevant. The study showed that the fielding of SPD candidates follows a rather open practice without, however, ignoring traditional preferences or relationships.

¹¹⁶ Hamburger Programme, political programme of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, federal party convent in Hamburg, October 28th 2008.

¹¹⁷ Hamburger Programm, political programme of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, federal party convent in Hamburg, October 28th 2008.

¹¹⁸ Cf. SPD party statute consisting of an organizational policy (*OrgStatut*), ballot rules and regulations (*WO*), rules of arbitration (*Schiedsordnung*), and financial regime and system (*Finanzordnung*) As per: October 26th 2007.

¹¹⁹ Interview in the Willy-Brandt Haus 12.11.2008/"Hamburg programme"

¹²⁰ Cf. SPD Wahlordnung §4 (1), as per: 26.10.2007

¹²¹ The district chapters Weser-Ems, Hessen Nord, Hessen-Süd, Nord-Niedersachsen are also accounted for.

¹²² Interview in the Willy-Brandt Haus 12.11.2008

Länder/ district	Number of delegates
Schleswig-Holstein	11
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	3
Hamburg	6
Bremen	3
Niedersachsen	
<i>Nord-Niedersachsen</i>	4
<i>Weser-Ems</i>	10
<i>Hannover</i>	16
<i>Braunschweig</i>	6
Sachsen-Anhalt	4
Brandenburg	5
Berlin	9
Nordrhein-Westfalen	74
Hessen-Nord	11
Hessen-Süd	20
Thüringen	4
Sachsen	5
Saarland	9
Rheinland-Pfalz	20
Baden-Württemberg	24
Bayern	36
Entitled to vote at the SPD convention for the European elections	280

Table 4: Allocation of places in the convention for the European elections

The allocation of delegates in the Länder party associations or the districts conforms with two-thirds of the number of members in the Länder associations and to one-third with the indirect vote of the Bundestag elections 2005.

According to the rules of procedure of the party convention for the European elections candidates have a 10 minutes right to present their programme. However, if there is no rival candidate for a list position, a presentation of candidates and programme is not recommended.¹²³ The national party executive committee presents the top-candidate (Martin Schulz) at the party convention. Additional candidate proposals can be turned in, up to one hour after the beginning of the party convention. Only the delegates that are entitled to vote can make additional candidate proposals. The fielding of candidates is subject to a secret ballot and starts with the top-candidate. The subsequent list positions are voted en bloc. If a delegate disagrees about certain list places, s/he can also vote for those places separately (*verbundene Einzelwahl*).

Influence from the European level

Martin Schulz is chairman of the European socialists group in the European Parliament (PES) and at the same time he is member of the SPD Presidium, which is the executive branch of the federal party committee. During meetings of the latter mentioned body there is a regular

¹²³ Rules of procedure for the *Europadelegiertenkonferenz* §3, 1-7, as per: 08.12.2008

exchange of information regarding EU policies and party issues.¹²⁴ An impact of the European level can be observed here and is quasi-unavoidable, as party officials confirmed. However, this is rather a coincidence and not a systematic mechanism. An impact of the European Socialist Party on the SPD during the total fielding of candidates on the electoral list or other means of selecting candidates for the European elections can be regarded as practically non-existent.

FDP - Freie Demokratische Partei

Party Statute

The official institutions of the Free Democratic Party of Germany (*Freie Demokratische Partei-FDP*) are the national party convention, the executive committee, and the national party convention for the European elections.¹²⁵ According to § 15 of the FDP party statute, the national party convention for the European elections consists of delegates from the Länder associations. These delegates are elected at the Länder assembly of delegates. By the same token, the Länder assembly of delegates consists of members of the districts.

The FDP Länder associations propose their respective top-candidates to the federal executive committee. Based on these proposals of the Länder associations the federal executive committee compiles a list of candidates for the FDP party convention for the European elections. The federal executive committee can make informal recommendations regarding the Länder proposals. However, these recommendations are non-binding for the Länder associations. The sequencing on the electoral list is subject to the number of party members in the Länder association, the results of Bundestag elections 2005 and the European Parliament elections 2004. The FDP party does not apply any gender quorum.

Moreover, the FDP-group Europa (*Auslandsgruppe Europa*), an independent sub-organization within the FDP party, sends five of its members to the national party convention for the European elections with voting power. In the FDP-group Europa are associated FDP party members, who are living or working in a European country other than Germany. At the general meeting of the FDP-group Europa the delegates for the national FDP party convention are elected.¹²⁶ Thus, formally the FDP-group Europa is treated like a Länder party association. The same status is valid for the Liberal Youth organization (*Junge Liberale*), which is an independent organization within the FDP party and formally handled like a Länder association.¹²⁷ They have candidates and voting rights at the national FDP party convention. Though, both organizations are not legally associated with any specific Länder association, their treatment seems to be aiming at widening the pool of potential candidates.

At the national party convention for the European elections the candidates are elected in a secret ballot. Still, the delegates are allowed to make a bid for a candidacy. The first twenty candidates are elected separately. The remaining candidates are elected en bloc. At the national party convention for the European election on January 17th, the 11th list position was subject to a run-off ballot. Two candidates run for the same place on a list and the candidate who brought

¹²⁴ Interview in the Willy-Brandt Haus 12.11.2008

¹²⁵ Cf. *Bundessatzung der Freien Demokratischen Partei*, §10 (2) as per: 15.06.2007

¹²⁶ statute of the FDP-group Europa §6 (9), as per: 23.01.1988: Die Mitgliederversammlung ist das oberste Organ der Auslandsgruppe. Sie ist insbesondere zuständig für: (9) die Wahl der Delegierten und Ersatzdelegierten zur Bundesvertreterversammlung für die Aufstellung der Bewerber für die Wahl zum Europäischen Parlament.

¹²⁷ Cf. *Bundessatzung der Jungen Liberalen* §2 (1), as per: 11.04.1999

together most of the votes got the place. The defeated candidate was then allowed to run for a lower list's place again. Those candidates were Alexandra Thein (Berlin), Dr. Magnus Buhlert (Bremen), Dr. Olaf Prüßmann (Auslandsgruppe Europa), Alexander Schreiber (Nordrhein-Westfalen) and Hildebrecht Braun (Bayern). Alexandra Thein (Berlin) finally won the ballot battle with 74,41%.

Candidates 1-20 as elected per 17.01.2009	Land (Landesverbände)
Silvana Koch-Mehrin	Baden-Württemberg
Alexander Graf Lambsdorff	Nordrhein-Westfalen
Jorgo Chatzimarkakis	Saarland
Wolf Klinz	Hessen
Gesine Meißner	Niedersachsen
Alexander Alvaro	Junge Liberale
Holger Krahmer	Sachsen
Michael Theurer	Baden-Württemberg
Nadja Hirsch	Bayern
Jürgen Creutzmann	Rheinland-Pfalz
Alexandra Thein	Berlin
Britta Reimers	Schleswig-Holstein
Matthias Purdel	Thüringen
Alexander Plahr	Nordrhein-Westfalen
Norbert Meyer	Niedersachsen
Franz Prockl	Bayern
Kornelia Kimpfel	Brandenburg
Friedrich Hülsenbeck	Sachsen-Anhalt
Tom Eich	Baden-Württemberg
Fridjof Matuszewski	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Table 5: Candidate list

Influence of the European party

The 1st deputy leader of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) in the European Parliament is Silvana Koch-Mehrin, who is at the same time the top-candidate for Baden-Württemberg. An impact of the European level, even it is only the liberal group, on the selection of a national candidate can be observed here. However, this is not a systematic mechanism. An impact of the European liberals on the fielding of the electoral list of the FDP or other means of selecting FDP-candidates for the European elections can be regarded as merely non-existent.

Bündnis90/Die Grünen

The self-perception of the German Green Party “*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*” is that of a citizen-oriented and basic-democratic party.¹²⁸ The party statute acknowledges the importance of equal

¹²⁸ Statute „Grüne Regeln – Grundkonsens, Satzung, Frauenstatut, Beitrags- und Kassenordnung, Schiedsgerichtsordnung, Urabstimmungsordnung, p. 39.

participation in a democratic society.¹²⁹ In order to allow a decentralized decision-making, the party guarantees the biggest possible autonomy for the sub-organizations on local, district and Länder level.¹³⁰ Although its self-perception might lead to the conclusion that the Green Party enters into the European election with lists on the Länder level, it is true that the party - as a smaller one - opts, like the liberals, for a nation-wide list. This is to have better chances in the competition with bigger parties like the CDU or the SPD.

Party Statute

The party statute on national level specifies the general organization of the party, and its sub-organizations in local chapters, basic groups, districts, and Länder organizations.¹³¹ Furthermore, it prescribes the existence and the functioning of the party bodies on the federal level. The most important body in the process of the selection of candidates for the European Parliament is the federal assembly of delegates, which is the Green equivalent of other parties' party conventions.¹³² The number of delegates (elected within the district members' assemblies¹³³) coming from one district is calculated according to the number of the district multiplied by 750, divided through the number of party members nation-wide. However, each district needs to have at least one delegate. Furthermore, the women's percentage needs to be 50%.

The national assembly of delegates becomes formally effective with more than one third of the delegates being present.¹³⁴ These delegates are responsible for secretly electing¹³⁵ the final candidates for the national electoral list to the European Parliament. The Green Party accentuates its ambitions to support women in political positions by codifying an absolute parity of women on the electoral lists: Lists need to be filled alternating with women and men, with women getting the uneven numbers.¹³⁶

The national assembly of delegates that decided upon the electoral list for the 2009 European election took place on January 23rd-25th 2009 in Dortmund.¹³⁷ Only the final elections of candidates in Dortmund were decisive. The electoral list headed by Rebecca Harms and Reinhard Bütikofer, one of the previous party leaders, is binding. This is not the case for the candidates that have been nominated by the assemblies of delegates on Länder level. Länder associations, deciding for the option of a separate convention for the European elections mainly emphasize the possibility and the necessity of strengthening the political awareness about

¹²⁹ Statute „Grüne Regeln - Grundkonsens, Satzung, Frauenstatut, Beitrags- und Kassenordnung, Schiedsgerichtsordnung, Urabstimmungsordnung, p.13. „Demokratie soll die gleichberechtigte Teilnahme aller an der Gestaltung des Gemeinwesens gewährleisten“.

¹³⁰ Statute „Grüne Regeln - Grundkonsens, Satzung, Frauenstatut, Beitrags- und Kassenordnung, Schiedsgerichtsordnung, Urabstimmungsordnung, p. 39, §10,1: „Um eine dezentrale Parteigliederung und Basisdemokratie zu verwirklichen, regelt die Satzung eine größtmögliche Autonomie der Orts-, Kreis- und Landesverbände. Entscheidende Organe sind die jeweiligen Mitglieder- bzw. Delegiertenversammlungen“.

¹³¹ Statute Grüne Regeln - Grundkonsens, Satzung, Frauenstatut, Beitrags- und Kassenordnung, Schiedsgerichtsordnung, Urabstimmungsordnung, 38/39 § 9,1.

¹³² Bündnis90/ Die Grünen - Bundespartei - Parteitag (www.gruene.de/cms/defaults/9/9308.bundesparteitag.htm).

¹³³ Statute Grüne Regeln ... op.cit., p. 41.

¹³⁴ Statute Grüne Regeln ... op.cit., p. 58, § 21,4.

¹³⁵ Statute Grüne Regeln... op.cit., p. 59, § 22,1.

¹³⁶ Statute Grüne Regeln ... op.cit., p. 40, § 11.

¹³⁷ Bündnis90/ Die Grünen- Bundespartei - Tagesordnungsvorschlag für die 29. Ordentliche Bundesdelegiertenkonferenz am 23. - 25. Januar 2009, Dortmund, Westfalenhalle, (www.gruene.de/cms/partei/dok/258/258179.tagesordnungsvorschlag.htm)

European topics at the party basis. Furthermore, they want to set a political signal concerning the importance of European issues to the public.¹³⁸

Interesting to note in this context is also the regional dimension of such so-called "primaries"¹³⁹ – in the case of Thüringen, Sachsen and Sachsen-Anhalt – or "regional conferences"¹⁴⁰ in the case of Bremen and Niedersachsen. In both cases several Länder organizations decided to organize a joint convention and to decide upon joint candidates to be sent to the national assembly of delegates. Moreover, the "regional conference" of Niedersachsen and Bremen even had a trans-national dimension with the participation of the provinces of Groningen and Drenthe of the Dutch GROENLINKS.¹⁴¹ In contrast to these separate conventions, some Länder organizations do not attach so much importance to potential positive impulses coming from such a separate convention. The Bavarian Länder organization, for example, decided against convening a separate meeting for the selection of its two potential candidates.¹⁴²

The selection of candidates by the assemblies of delegates on Länder level does only have the character of recommendations. Still, each single member of Bündnis90/ Die Grünen is allowed to apply for a place on the nation-wide list for the European elections.¹⁴³ Thus, besides the recommended candidates, there are always also a lot of written and oral applications during assemblies of delegates on Länder level.¹⁴⁴ These are mostly well known people who already have some reputation in the party organisation. Moreover, there is also the possibility that during the assembly of delegates on the national level new candidates introduce themselves. The federal executive committee does not predetermine the sequencing of candidates on the final electoral list. It is a matter of the secret ballot during the green national assembly of delegates, whereby each candidate can apply for a certain place and has to fight for it.¹⁴⁵ A good speech, a good self-presentation and the power of persuasion play an important role concerning a successful candidacy. Werner Schulz, one of the first party members, who run for place number 8 on the electoral list without being nominated or suggested by a Länder organization or the federal executive committee, gave an example of an ad hoc candidacy. He challenged seven other candidates and persuaded the delegates with his address to choose him during the federal assembly of party delegates in 23rd-25th of January this year. Other well-known candidates, on the contrary, did not succeed in being re-elected by the delegates. Hence, one can conclude that the seniority principle does not apply per se. Being member of the European Parliament is not the only argument working in favour of a certain candidate.

Influence of the European level

Concerning the influence of the European green party on the selection of candidates, there is only an indirect influence detectable. Although candidates such as Rebecca Harms or Michael Cramer occupy important positions within the European green party association, it is more the case that the European greens have a certain influence on the electoral campaign and the party programme rather than on the selection of candidates itself.

¹³⁸ Interview with Bündnis90/ Die Grünen, Landesverband Thüringen , 18.12.2008.

¹³⁹ dto.

¹⁴⁰www.gruene-niedersachsen.de/cms/presse/dok/249/249523.gruene_bereiten_sich_auf_europawahl_2009.htm.

¹⁴¹ dto.

¹⁴² Interview with Bündnis90/ Die Grünen, Landesverband Bayern, 18.12.2008.

¹⁴³ Interview held on December 17th 2008.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with member of MdB held in November 2008.

¹⁴⁵ Interview held on December 17th 2008.

Nº	Name	Voting results	Länder organization
1.	Rebecca Harms (MdEP)	80,4%	Niedersachsen
2.	Reinhard Bütkofer	81,7%	Baden-Württemberg
3.	Heide Rühle (MdEP)	50,79%	Baden-Württemberg
4.	Sven Giegold	73,24%	Nordrhein-Westfalen (Attac)
5.	Barbara Lochbihler	82,31%	Bayern (amnesty)
6.	Michael Cramer (MdEP)	73,31%	Berlin
7.	Ska Keller	60,84% (2nd ballot)	Brandenburg
8.	Werner Schulz	68,36% (2nd ballot)	Sachsen/Berlin
9.	Helga Trüpel	60,56% (2nd ballot)	Bremen
10.	Martin Häusling	60,41% (2nd ballot)	Hessen
11.	Franziska Brantner	54,25% (2nd ballot)	Baden-Württemberg
12.	Jan Philipp Albrecht	51,72% (2nd ballot)	Green Youth / Niedersachsen
13.	Elisabeth Schroedter (MdEP)	57,23% (3rd ballot)	Brandenburg
14.	Gerlad Häfner	51,05% (3rd ballot)	Bayern
15.	Hiltrud Breyer (MdEP)	49,35% (2nd ballot)	Saarbrücken
16.	Andreas Braun	58,93% (1st ballot)	Baden-Württemberg
17.	Gisela Kallenbach (MdEP)	55,70%	Sachsen
18.	Peter Alberts	53,46%	Nordrhein-Westfalen
19.	Eva Maria Vögtle	51,15%	Baden-Württemberg
20.	Nikolaus Schütte zur Wick	58,57%	Niedersachsen
21.	Karin Schmitt-Promny	56,74%	Nordrhein-Westfalen
22.	Constantino Gianfrancesco	50,57%	Hessen
23.	Claire Labigne	59,55%	Hessen
24.	Björn Hayer	54,99%	Rheinland-Pfalz
25.	Renate Knauf	51,46%	Nordrhein-Westfalen

Table 6: Final list of Green candidates

Die Linke

The German party “The Left” (*Die Linke*) is a relatively new party in Germany, which was formed by the former WASG (“Wahlalternative Arbeit & soziale Gerechtigkeit”) and the PDS (“Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus”) in 2007. All practices of selecting candidates for the European elections in 2009 are subject to the party statutes decided upon at the federal party convention in March 2007.¹⁴⁶ The Left enters into the European election campaign with a nation-wide electoral list. According to the party statute § 21 (5), the federal committee (*Bundesausschuss*) submits a candidate proposal to the federal party convention for the European elections¹⁴⁷. The federal committee is composed of members of the Länder associations and the executive committee.¹⁴⁸ The federal party convention for the European elections is made up of members of the Länder associations and the districts. The final selection of candidates at the federal party convention for the European elections is binding. Moreover, the federal executive committee adopted a resolution in October 2008 about “candidacy criteria for elections 2009” and presented a candidate proposal at the federal party convention for the European elections. Those applicants that are willing to apply for a position on the nation-wide electoral list for the party “The Left”, needed to turn in an application to the federal executive committee by the 5th of January 2009 the latest. The federal party convention for the European elections is to be held on the 1st of March 2009.

¹⁴⁶ Party statute WASG und der Linkspartei. PDS. As per: 24th/25th of March in Dortmund

¹⁴⁷ Party statute Die Linke §21 (5) : “Der Bundesausschuss unterbreitet der Bundesvertretersammlung einen Personalvorschlag zur Aufstellung der Bundesliste für die Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament.”

¹⁴⁸ Party statute Die Linke §22 (1)

Thus, the selecting of candidates is subject to suggestions made by the party executive committee, the federal committee (*Bundesausschuss*), and the federal party convention for the European elections. The delegates of the federal party convention are elected at the Länder assemblies. The sequencing on the electoral list acts upon a key, which is determined by the party executive committee and by gender aspects, as laid down in §10 party statutes.¹⁴⁹ However, as “The Left” is a rather new party in the German party system, the procedures for selecting candidates for the European elections 2009 are still in a status nascendi and further developing.

Influence of the European party

Lothar Bisky, party leader of “The Left”, is also chairperson in the executive board of the party of the European Left (*EL-Europäische Linke*). A direct relationship of the European political party and the German political party can be observed here. However, according to the interviews held with party representatives, the European political party has only an influence on the general political debate. The European political party does not essentially influence the selecting of candidates.

Conclusion

The selection and fielding of German candidates for the election to the European Parliament and the establishing of the final electoral lists have their legal basis in European primary law on the one hand and in German laws on the other. These are strict measures to commit political parties to the principles of a free and democratic order. Differences of selecting and fielding the candidates are due to the different party statutes and the respective internal organizational party structure. In general one can conclude that all German parties favour a bottom-up approach, which implies a decision-making first on the district and Länder level and in a final step on the federal level with some exceptions in the case of the CDU. The dimensions of the bottom-up approach vary throughout the parties. However, the executive committees have always an essential influence on the selection the top-candidates. The so-called ‘seniority principle’ has formally no impact on selecting the German candidates, but informal communication of the executive committee and the Länder associations leads to certain candidate preferences, whereby anyway a considerable number of MEPs become re-elected, provided there is no generational sea change among young and old party members underway. Finally, the analysed European political parties and the political groups of the European Parliament have only marginal influence in selecting and fielding the candidates for the European Parliament elections.

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Terminology

German term	English translation
Rechtliche Grundlagen	Legal foundations
Grundgesetz	German Basic law
Parteiengesetz	Party Law / Law on political party
Europawahlgesetz	European Election Act
Europäische Wahlordnung	European Election Regulation
Bundesebene	Federal level
Länderebene	Länder/ State level
Bezirksebene	District level
Bundespartei	Federal party association
Landespartei/-verband	State/ (Länder party) association
Delegiertenversammlung	Delegates' assembly
Europadelegiertenkonferenz	Party convention for the European Elections
Landesdelegiertenkonferenz	Länder assembly of delegates
Liste	List
Bundesliste	Nation-wide list
Landesliste	Länder list / list on Länder level
Verbundene Landeslisten	Joint Länder list
Parteivorstand	Executive committee

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Introduction 150

Candidate selection refers to the process by which political parties select suitable candidates and draw up their electoral lists in which the candidates are ranked according to the party's preference. The candidate selection process is important because it reflects the distribution of power in the parties, and can be regarded as a litmus-test of the functioning of intra-party democracy. Despite the importance of the topic, little research has been conducted on how Estonian parties draw up their electoral lists.¹⁵¹ Indeed, this briefing may be the first study focusing on candidate selection by Estonian political parties for EP elections.

Estonia has six seats in the EP. The elections take place in one national electoral district according to the principle of proportional representation and seats are allocated according to the D'Hondt method. Political parties draw up electoral lists, consisting of up to 12 candidates. Independent candidates can also run. There has been an extensive debate over the use of open-list or closed-list proportional representation in EP elections, resulting in a series of amendments to the Estonian EP Election Act. While the 2004 EP elections in Estonia were held using the open-list system, the 2009 election will be closed-list.

Voter turnout in the 2004 EP elections was 26.8%. The biggest winner was the Social Democratic Party (3 seats). The Reform Party, the Centre Party and the Pro Patria Union each won 1 seat. The governing Res Publica Party and People's Union polled poorly and did not gain representation in the EP. The upcoming EP elections will take place on June 7, 2009. The main contenders are the six political parties currently represented in the national parliament, the *Riigikogu* (the Reform Party, the Centre Party, Pro Patria and Res Publica Union, the Social Democratic Party, Green Party and People's Union). These are the parties covered in this briefing.

The statutes of most Estonian political parties contain very limited information about the candidate selection process. Furthermore, the drawing up of the party lists for EP elections takes place relatively late. By the time of the completion of this study, only one political party had made its electoral list public. Consequently, there has been very little media coverage of the selection procedures in the political parties. As a result, interviews with party officials were the main source of information for this Briefing. As a rule, the party officials contacted willingly agreed to the interviews, providing rather detailed information about party procedures and practices. However, only one party provided access to the intra-party documents regulating candidate selection.

This study begins with the analysis of the relevant national legislation, affecting candidate selection by political parties. It briefly outlines the implications of electoral reform (the open vs

¹⁵⁰ The author would like to thank Asja Mihhailitshenko, an MA student at the University of Tartu, for her assistance with this study. This research has also benefited from competence developed in the framework of the research project "Assessing Electoral Democracy in the EU: European Parliament Elections 2009" (ETF7903) supported by the Estonian Science Foundation.

¹⁵¹ Examples of relevant research include Riho Kangur, "Kandidaatide selekteerimine Eesti parlamentierakondades 1999-2003," *Riigikogu Toimetised* 10, 2004 and Olavi Otepalu, "Poliitilist edukust mõjutavad tegurid Riigikogu kandidaatide selekteerimise protsessis," MA thesis, University of Tartu, 2008.

closed list debate) on the candidate selection process. It then examines the candidate selection process in each of the six main political parties, focusing on relevant provisions in the party statutes and information obtained in the interviews. The concluding section summarizes the findings, assessing the degree of formalization and centralization of the candidate selection process in the Estonian political parties.

Legal, institutional and political context

Relevant national legislation

The **Estonian European Parliament Election Act**¹⁵² stipulates that an Estonian citizen who has attained at least 21 years of age by the day of elections has the right to stand as a candidate. Citizens of the European Union who have attained 21 years of age by the day of election who are included in the population register and have not been deprived of the right to vote in their country of origin are also eligible to stand as candidates. Persons who have been divested of legal capacity, have been convicted of a crime and are serving sentence in a penal institution, and persons who are regular members of the defense forces shall not stand as candidates.

Any political party entered in the non-profit associations and foundations register may participate in elections to the EP. Political parties participate in elections under their own name. Any person who is entitled to stand as a candidate may present himself or herself (or be presented by any person entitled to the right to vote) for registration as an independent candidate.

The provisions of the **Estonian EP Election** Act regarding the drawing up of the electoral list by political parties are rather limited. Article 28 of the Act states:

- A political party shall prepare a list of candidates.
- A list of candidates may include up to twelve candidates.
- A person may stand as a candidate in the candidate list of only one political party. A
- person presented for registration as an independent candidate shall not stand as a candidate in a list of candidates and a member of a political party registered in Estonia shall not stand as a candidate in the list of candidates of another political party.
- A political party may present only one candidate list for registration.
- The order of candidates in a list shall be specified by the political party.
- A list of candidates shall be signed by all authorised representatives of the political party.

Thus, the national legislation does not prescribe any specific procedures for drawing up the party list. The decision what procedures to apply in the selection and ranking of candidates rests entirely with the political parties.

The electoral system

The EP elections in Estonia take place in one national electoral district according to the principle of proportional representation and seats are allocated according to the D'Hondt method. While

¹⁵² The Act was passed on 18 December 2002 and entered into force 23 January 2003. It has been amended 10 times between 2003 and 2009.

other elements of the electoral system have been uncontested, the question of open versus closed party lists has produced a recurring debate among political parties and experts, leading to a series of amendments to the EP Election Act.

Under the **closed-list system**, voters vote for a party or an independent candidate (i.e. not for a specific candidate on the party's electoral list). Candidates are elected according to their pre-determined rank in the party list and according to the number of mandates won by the party. Under the **open-list system**, voters vote for specific candidates on the party list and the candidates are subsequently reranked according to the number of votes received. Thus, voters determine the order in which a party's candidates are elected.

In its original formulation, the EP Election Act, passed by the *Riigikogu* in December 2002, stipulated the use of closed-list proportional representation (PR). In 2004, the parliament amended the Act, enacting open-list PR. While President Arnold Rüütel initially refused to promulgate the law, he eventually succumbed to the will of the parliamentary majority. Open lists were thus used in the 2004 EP elections.¹⁵³ In November 2006, another revision of the EP Election Act was initiated in the *Riigikogu* and the electoral system was changed back to closed-list PR.¹⁵⁴

In 2008, the parties engaged in yet another round of debate over open versus closed lists. In September 2008, the Constitutional Committee of the *Riigikogu* initiated a bill that would change the system for electing the EP back to open-list PR.¹⁵⁵ The first reading of the bill in the *Riigikogu* took place on November 12, 2008; a second reading has been scheduled. Although the open-list system has the support of the majority of members of *Riigikogu*, and is also favored by the general public,¹⁵⁶ it does not have the support of the leading coalition partner, the Reform Party.¹⁵⁷ With only four months left until the elections, it is virtually certain that the upcoming EP elections will be closed-list. A summary of party positions on open vs closed lists is included in Appendix 1.

Implications of open vs closed lists for candidate selection

The debate on open *versus* closed party lists has important implications for the candidate selection process within parties. Closed-list PR cultivates a party-centered campaign as voters vote for the party ticket. Because ranking on the party list determines the candidate's chances of being elected, the closed-list system intensifies intra-party competition.¹⁵⁸ At the same time, it reduces the motivation of candidates to campaign because, depending on the party, only the first few candidates on the list have a realistic chance of being elected. The closed-list system also

¹⁵³ While the voters generally favored candidates ranked at the top of the party list, some reordering did occur: for instance, the only mandate won by the Centre Party went to Siiri Oviir, number 3 on the party list.

¹⁵⁴ Arguably, the amendment was designed to restrain parties from riding in the coattails of a popular states(wo)man. In the 2004 elections, Toomas Hendrik Ilves of the small Social Democratic Party polled nearly a third of all votes cast, endowing the party with half of the Estonian seats in the EP.

¹⁵⁵ The bill (341 SE II-1) along with a letter of explanation and proceedings, is available at the webpage of the Constitutional Committee of the *Riigikogu* at <http://www.riigikogu.ee/index.php?id=31638>. The Government refrained from expressing its opinion about the bill, allegedly due to conflicting opinions of the various ministries.

¹⁵⁶ According to an opinion poll organized by Emor, 88% of respondents favored open-list PR. "Inimesed eelistavad avatud nimekirjade alusel valimisi," *Eesti Päevaleht*, December 6, 2008, www.epl.ee

¹⁵⁷ Reportedly, partners in the governing coalition have agreed that in the absence of a consensus within the coalition, no change of the electoral system will be carried out.

¹⁵⁸ Greater-than-usual intra-party tensions are reportedly evident in Estonia. See Kai Kalamees, "Europarlamenti valimine toob armutu parteisisese heitluse" *Postimees*, July 23, 2008.

encourages the use of “decoy ducks”: the parties are tempted to choose popular politicians and party leaders as the number one on the list, even when it is highly doubtful that the person would assume work in the EP, if elected. The choice of Edgar Savisaar, the mayor of Tallinn as number one on the electoral list of the Centre Party, is an example of such vote-seeking behavior.¹⁵⁹ This has created incentives for other parties to follow a similar strategy and threatens to turn EP elections into a popularity competition of top politicians.¹⁶⁰ Some politicians have condemned the practice: most prominently, Siim Kallas, Vice President of the European Commission has declared that he will not become a decoy duck for the Reform Party, and has called on other popular politician to run in EP elections only in case they actually intend to start working in the EP.¹⁶¹ The complicated strategic calculations associated with the closed-list system may also help explain why most Estonian parties have waited so long with announcing their electoral lists, taking the time to watch the moves of competitors.¹⁶²

Open-list PR, in contrast, fosters candidate-centered elections. Individual motivation to campaign is stronger. Reliance on decoy ducks is somewhat less likely, because it would presumably be more difficult for a politician elected on an individual ticket to turn down a seat in the EP. However, in 2004, President Arnold Rüütel explained his refusal to promulgate the law enacting open-list PR precisely on the ground that under the open-list system, “the voters cannot be certain that the candidate they preferred will actually represent them in the European Parliament.”¹⁶³ His critics pointed out that closed-list system does not offer any guarantees in this respect, either.

Second-order national elections?

The well-known thesis according to which EP elections constitute „second-order national elections”¹⁶⁴ provides many cues for analyzing candidate selection within political parties. According to this thesis, EP elections are dominated by national issues, and are used by the voters to punish or reward the governing parties.

The timing and circumstances of the 2009 EP elections in Estonia suggest that these elections will have strong second-order characteristics. Taking place two years after the last *Riigikogu* elections, with the government completing two years in office, these elections are genuine mid-term elections. The elections coincide with a major economic crisis that is already taking a toll on the support rates of the government parties. Furthermore, the EP elections in June are widely regarded as a warm-up for local government elections held in October 2009. Under these circumstances, party candidate selection will be influenced by the understanding that the elections entail a vote of confidence in the government. Both the governing parties and the opposition parties have incentives to enlist their biggest vote-magnets with little regard to their EU-related competence or interest to serve in the EP.

However, the „second-order” thesis is not the only plausible model for conceptualizing EP elections in Estonia. Indeed, the 2004 EP elections in Estonia are best characterized as „the elections of the Estonian ambassador to the EU,” as aptly phrased by one of the party officials

¹⁵⁹ Savisaar has evaded the question of whether he would take up a seat in the EP, if elected „Savisaar puikles europarlamenti mineku kohta vastamisest kõrvale,” *Eesti Päevaleht*, October 9, 2008.

¹⁶⁰ „Savisaare kandidaatmine paneb proovile teised parteijuhid,” *Eesti Päevaleht*, September 7, 2008.

¹⁶¹ Kärt Anvelt, Raimo Poom, „Siim Kallas ei hakka peibutuspardiks,” *Eesti Päevaleht*, October 17, 2008.

¹⁶² See also Neeme Korp, „Repliik: eurovalimised, vähe- ja ülitähtsad,” *Postimees*, July 22, 2008.

¹⁶³ Toomas Mattson and Toomas Sildam, „Rüütel ei soovi valimistele peibutusparte,” *Postimees*, March 8, 2004.

¹⁶⁴ Karlheinz Reif and Hermann Schmitt (1980) ‘Nine Second-Order National Elections: A Conceptual Framework For The Analysis of European Election Results’, *European Journal of Political Research* 8/1: 3–44.

interviewed. In 2004, the first-ranked candidate of the Social Democratic Party, Toomas Hendrik Ilves (then Foreign Minister, now President of Estonia) received about 1/3 of all votes cast in the election. This conceptualization of the elections would lead parties to seek out candidates with outstanding foreign policy competence and an established international reputation to top their lists. However, given the differences in the political and economic context between the 2004 and 2009 elections, it is likely that the „vote of confidence” aspect of the upcoming elections will be much more dominant than the „ambassador-effect.”

Candidate selection process in political parties

Overview of main political parties in Estonia

This analysis focuses on the six political parties currently represented in the *Riigikogu*. All six parties have declared their intention to draw up electoral lists for the upcoming EP elections. All six stand a chance of winning at least one seat (with the possible exception of the People's Union whose support rate has been under 5% throughout most of 2008).

Name	Party ideology	European party affiliation	Seats in Riigikogu (out of 101)	Seats in the EP (out of 6)
Estonian Reform Party (Eesti Reformierakond)	pro-market liberal	European Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR)	31	1
Estonian Centre Party (Eesti Keskerakond)	liberal/centrist	European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR)	28	1
Pro Patria and Res Publica Union (Isamaa ja Res Publica Liit)	conservative	European People's Party (EPP)	19	1
Estonian Social Democratic Party (Eesti Sotsiaaldemokraadid)	social-democratic	Party of European Socialists (PES)	10	3
Estonian Greens (Erakond Eestimaa Rohelised)	green	European Green Party (EGP)	6	0
Estonian People's Union (Eestimaa Rahvaliit)	national-conservative	Alliance for Europe of the Nations (AEN)	6	0

Table 1. Overview of main political parties in Estonia

Estonian Reform Party

The statute of the Reform Party (RP) contains the following provisions regarding the selection of candidates for EP elections:

The General Assembly approves the Party's electoral list for Riigikogu and European Parliament elections, making, if necessary, amendments and additions to this list. If the General Assembly has not approved the list one day before the date when the presentation of electoral lists starts, the Party Board will approve the list.”¹⁶⁵

Among the parties analyzed, the RP was clearly the least willing to provide sufficiently detailed information about its candidate selection procedures. Some information was obtained from the Secretary General of the RP, Kristen Michal.¹⁶⁶ The party will hold internal elections to determine its list for the EP election in February 2008. Party officials did not specify how the elections will be held; one candidate considered it likely that voters will be able to cast their vote at the regional party offices.¹⁶⁷ All party members can participate in the internal election. On the ballot, party members mark the names of up to 12 candidates. Candidates for internal elections can be set up by regional organizations and individual party members. Information about the candidates will be made available via press releases, e-mail lists and the party's news bulletin. The candidates are ranked according to the number of votes received. The Party Board and/or Council approve the election results and make unspecified “justified amendments.” According to the Secretary General, changes in the ranking can also be made by the party's electoral committee and the General Assembly. The impression emerging from the rather scarce information provided was that the Party Board has, in the end, considerable control over the drawing up of the electoral list.¹⁶⁸

Open vs closed lists: The RP is the only Estonian party clearly favouring closed lists (and effectively blocking the 2008 initiative to restore open lists). The stated reasons for preferring closed lists include the alleged potential of closed lists to increase voter turnout (27% in the 2004 open-list elections). Also, the RP emphasizes that EP elections should be about “choice among alternative world-views,” hoping that closed lists would promote debate over ideas, rather than “the personal qualities of specific individuals.” The RP admits that closed lists underline the importance of intra-party selection decisions and make the campaigns more party-centered.

Position on decoy ducks: While the list of the RP has not been announced, the media has speculated that the RP will place its main vote-magnets, incumbent Prime Minister Andrus Ansip or Vice President of the European Commission, Siim Kallas (both of whom are unlikely to take up seats in the EP) as its top-ranked candidates. Party officials interviewed did not comment on this possibility (while Kallas himself has said he will not run). Their overall

¹⁶⁵ Article 20.5 of the Statute of the Estonian Reform Party, adopted June 3, 2007, www.reform.ee/erakonnast/erakond/pohikiri (accessed January 12, 2009).

¹⁶⁶ An interview with party officials could not be scheduled. The General Secretary provided very short explanations by email.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Silver Meikar, member of the *Riigikogu* and a candidate of the RP for the EP, conducted by phone on January 25, 2009.

¹⁶⁸ This impression coincides with the results of a study focusing on party candidate selection for *Riigikogu* elections. The study found that even though the RP held internal elections, its decision mechanisms were controlled by central party organizations, particularly the Board. See Riho Kangur, “Kandidaatide selekteerimine Eesti parlamendierakondades 1999-2003,” *Riigikogu Toimetised* 10, 2004.

approach to the issue, however, appears to be legalistic. The Secretary General of the party stated that “standing as a candidate in EP elections is a constitutional right that cannot be taken away,” while expressing his belief that voters are sufficiently competent to “distinguish candidates from decoy ducks.” The use of closed lists implies that candidates should be concerned not so much with individual success but with securing a strong election result for the party.¹⁶⁹ The wish to use one’s popularity to help the party win votes is considered as a sufficiently good reason for standing as a candidate.¹⁷⁰

Impact of European parties: The Reform Party is a member of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party. Reportedly, the ELDR has no influence on the candidate selection process in the Reform Party.

Estonian Centre Party

The party statute contains the following provisions regarding the selection of candidates for the EP elections (Article 15 entitled “Preliminary Elections”):

The party may, based on the decision by the Council, hold public or intra-party preliminary elections for the purpose of drawing up electoral lists of candidates to the European Parliament.../

*All persons having the right to vote according to the electoral acts have the right to participate in public preliminary elections. Only members of the party participate in intra-party elections. The time, procedures and requirements of both public and intra-party preliminary elections are decided by the Council.*¹⁷¹

The Centre Party was the first among Estonian political parties to hold internal elections and make its electoral list for the 2009 EP elections public.¹⁷² The 27 regional party organizations (representing the 15 counties and the largest cities) and five intra-party associations (for local governments, young members, seniors, greens, and women) could each present up to 12 candidates for the preliminary elections.¹⁷³ All organizations used the opportunity to set up candidates; most organizations presented 6-7 names. The process of drawing up the list of proposed candidates varied from region to region: in some cases, the issue was discussed at the general meeting of members, in other cases, the decision was taken at the regional Board level.

The deadline for submitting the names of candidates for internal elections was August 20th, 2008. By the same date, individuals who wished to withdraw their candidature could do so. Overall, 28 names were submitted, and 7 individuals withdrew their candidature. The profiles and presentations of all 21 candidates were published in a special issue of the party’s news bulletin which was sent by mail to all party members. Information about the candidates was also circulated electronically via mailing-lists. Some candidates attended meetings of the regional party organizations as part of their campaign.

¹⁶⁹ Comments by Silver Meikar, sent by e-mail January 24, 2009.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ The statute of the Estonian Centre Party, adopted August 21, 2005, available at <http://www.keskerakond.ee/erakond/pohikiri>

¹⁷² The Centre Party held internal elections to draw up its electoral list for EP elections also in 2004. The possibility to hold public preliminary elections, envisioned in the statute, has never been used.

¹⁷³ Information presented in this section is based on the author’s interview with Kadri Simson, deputy Chair of the Centre Party Board, conducted on January 14, 2009.

The preliminary elections were held from September 1 to September 10th, 2008. All party members received the ballot by mail. Each member had up to seven votes.¹⁷⁴ About one quarter of the party members participated in the internal elections.

The candidates were ranked according to the number of votes received. The resulting electoral list was made public shortly after the elections. In April 2009, the Party will hold its electoral conference, attended by representatives of the regional organizations and intra-party associations, where the electoral list together with the party's electoral platform will be formally approved. This event will also mark the last opportunity for individuals on the list to withdraw their candidature, if they so wish.

Party position on open vs. closed lists: The Centre Party supported changeover to closed-list PR in 2006. In 2008, however, it backed the bill initiated by the Constitutional Committee of the *Riigikogu* that envisions the reintroduction of open-list PR. According to the Deputy Chair of the Party Board, Kadri Simson, the party is ready to change the system back to open lists already before the upcoming elections.¹⁷⁵ The low motivation of candidates ranked below the top three to campaign for the party was cited as the main problem with the closed-list system. Amending the rules of the game months prior to the elections would be acceptable on the grounds that the change would restore the electoral system that was used in 2004 and is thus already familiar to voters and parties.

Position on decoy ducks: Having placed the party's leader and mayor of Tallinn as number one on the list, the party defends the practice of enlisting candidates whose readiness to start working in the EP is questionable at best. According to a party official, the use of closed-list PR implies that all candidates are campaigning for the party, as their votes will be pooled. The Centre Party candidates are not asked to "sign a pledge" about their intentions, and "helping the party" is regarded as a legitimate reason for being included in the list.¹⁷⁶

Impact of European political parties: Reportedly, the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR) has no impact on the candidate selection process within the Estonian Centre Party.

Pro Patria and Res Publica Union

The party statute contains the following provision regarding the drawing up of the electoral list for EP elections: The Council approves the Party's candidates for European Parliament and Riigikogu elections according to the [intra-party] rules of electoral procedure.¹⁷⁷

A more detailed account of the candidate selection process in the PPRPU was provided by Ott Lumi, member of the Party Board.¹⁷⁸ In spring 2008, the procedures for determining the list of party candidates for EP elections were debated in the Party Council. The proposal to hold internal elections did not gain sufficient support. The regulation, approved by the Council, stipulates that the Chairman of the Party Board will propose a list of candidates to the Board. The Board will approve the list and send it to the Party Council to obtain the latter's approval.

¹⁷⁴ The ballot was placed in an unmarked envelope, which in turn was placed into a larger postal envelope bearing the sender's name. This system of double envelopes allowed the party to keep track of who voted, while retaining the secrecy of the vote.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ The Statute of the Pro Patria and Res Publica Union, approved on June 4, 2006, available at <http://www.irl.ee/et/Ajalugu-ja-dokumendid/Pohikiri>

¹⁷⁸ Interview conducted by phone on January 19, 2009.

Thus, the leader of the party plays a central role in the selection process, negotiating with prospective candidates about their inclusion and rank in the party's electoral list. In practice, the process appears to involve some dialogue between the Chairman and the Board: the Chairman presented the list of candidates to the Board on January 19th, 2009 and the Board had a week to propose amendments before making its decision. The Council is expected to take its decision on February 7, 2009.¹⁷⁹

Why did the Council prefer a rather centralized procedure for selecting candidates over holding internal elections? The reasons are reportedly related to the fact that the PPRPU is a rather new organization, created as the result of a merger of two conservative parties. The merger of two organizations with different internal cultures has created tensions which have received considerable media attention. According to Ott Lumi, member of the Party Board, internal elections were seen as having the potential to aggravate such tensions. However, the decision not to hold internal elections should also be seen as reflecting the procedural preferences of the power-holders in the party. At the same time, the intra-party rules and procedures (including practices for conflict resolution) have not been firmly established yet. As a result, many procedures are *ad hoc* (for instance, the procedures for drawing up the electoral list are decided separately for each election) and to an extent, lengthy and unpredictable. The question of whether the party should hold internal elections to draw up its list of candidates for Riigikogu, EP and local elections was debated hotly already at the time of drawing up the new statute for the merged party (i.e. in early 2006).

Position on open vs. closed lists: The party has been a staunch supporter of open lists, regarding the open-list system as more democratic (voters should have a say in who takes up a seat in the EP, especially given the secondary role of party ideology in EP elections) and as having a positive impact on voter turnout. Open lists help reduce tensions within the party because voters, not intra-party politics, determine who will be elected to the EP.¹⁸⁰

Position on "decoy ducks": Compared to most other Estonian parties, the PPRPU appears to attribute more importance to the EU-related competence of the candidates. The member of the Party Board interviewed made clear that the Party does not intend to trick voters, and the top three candidates on the list would certainly take up a seat in the EP, if elected. This approach is facilitated by the fact that the PPRPU can draw on a comparatively large pool of candidates with considerable foreign policy expertise and international experience.

Impact of European parties: According to the party official interviewed, the European People's Party has no influence on the candidate selection procedures and practices of the PPRPU.

Social Democratic Party

Compared to most other Estonian parties, the statute of the Social Democratic Party (SDE) lays out the procedures by which the electoral lists are drawn up more explicitly.¹⁸¹ Article 47 of the party statute states that internal elections will be held to determine the order of candidates on the party's electoral lists for elections to the *Riigikogu*, the EP and local governments. All party

¹⁷⁹ The procedures do not prescribe what would happen in the hypothetical case if the Board or the Council did not approve the list proposed by the Chairman. According to Ott Lumi, it is likely that the Chairman would then make amendments and present a new version of the list.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Ott Lumi, member of the Party Board on January 19, 2009.

¹⁸¹ The Statute of the Social Democratic Party, adopted on November 27, 1999, available at http://www.sotsdem.ee/public/files/sde_p6hikiri.pdf

members have the right to participate in internal elections for drawing up the list of party candidates to the *Riigikogu* and the EP.

Additional information about the candidate selection process within the SDE was provided by Randel Länts, Secretary General of the Party.¹⁸² The rules of procedure for the drawing up of the party list for EP elections were adopted on October 18, 2003. According to the document, internal elections take place at an electoral convention, convened according to the decision of the Party Council (and based on a proposal by the Board).¹⁸³ All members of the party are eligible to vote in internal elections. Each party member has six votes. Members who cannot attend the convention can vote by mail, having informed the Party Chancellery of their intention to do so beforehand.¹⁸⁴

The right to set up candidates rests with the regional party organizations (15 counties and the two largest cities), the intra-party associations (for women, senior members, and young members), the Party Board and the Chairman of the Board. Each of the above-mentioned bodies has the right to nominate up to twelve candidates. The candidates are formally presented by the Boards of the regional organizations and intra-party associations; however, Board decisions may be preceded by more broadbased discussions.

For the upcoming elections, the electoral convention has been scheduled for March 7, 2009. The nomination of candidates is currently in process. Some regional organizations have presented the full list of 12 candidates while others have submitted just one name. The candidates will be introduced in the party's news bulletin which is sent to all members by mail. Candidates also attend meetings of regional organizations. Following voting at the convention, the candidates will be ranked according to the number of votes received. Changes in the ranking are only possible if a candidate withdraws himself/herself, or asks to be assigned a lower position in the list.

The Party plans to make certain amendments to the existing regulations on internal elections before the electoral convention takes place. On February 7th 2009, the Party Council will vote on the proposed amendment, according to which the Chairman of the Party does not participate in internal elections but is automatically ranked as number one in the party's electoral list. According to the same amendment, the Chairman can withdraw his or her candidature in which case the list will be formed by the 12 candidates receiving the largest number of votes in internal elections, ranked according to the number of votes received. The Party's Secretary General linked the the rationale behind the proposed amendment to two factors: the use of closed-list PR in the 2009 EP elections and the currently ongoing change of leadership in the party.

Position on closed vs open lists: The SDE has consistently supported open-list PR which is seen as more fair towards the voter, as the voters, not the party, rank the candidates.¹⁸⁵ The party has accepted the fact that the 2009 elections will take place according to the closed-list system.

¹⁸² The interview was conducted by phone on January 20, 2009. Additional documents were sent by e-mail (internal regulations regarding EP elections, proposed amendments to the regulations).

¹⁸³ The preliminary voting by mail starts on the 21st day before the convention and ends on the 5th day before the convention. According to the existing regulations, information about the electoral convention and the preliminary voting are published in at least two daily newspapers with nation-wide circulation at least 22 days prior to the convention.

¹⁸⁴ The use of double envelopes helps ensure the secrecy of the vote. The regulations also include provisions for making sure that no double voting occurs (e.g. if a person who has already sent the ballot by mail also votes at the convention).

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Randel Länts on January 20, 2009.

Position on „decoy ducks”: The Secretary General of the SDE affirmed that the Party will not place decoy ducks at the top of the electoral list. The current Chairman of the Party, Ivari Padar, who almost certainly will occupy the top position in the list, has publicly declared (and affirmed to the Party Board) that he would take up a seat in the EP, if elected. However, the Secretary General of SDE said that the issue should not be regulated by law: parties should be free to decide who they include in their electoral lists and voters should be free to decide who to vote for.

Impact of European-level parties: The Party of European Socialists has no direct influence on the candidate selection process in the SDE. However, the party claims to be well aware of the responsibilities and high expectations placed on members of the Socialist group in the EP. The party anticipates the expectations and tries to select candidates with the necessary competence, international experience and proven political ability.¹⁸⁶

Estonian Greens

The statute of the Estonian Greens states that the Party Council "approves the party's candidates for elections." It also states that every member of the party has the right to run in EP elections, provided they have the support of the party, and have been nominated as party candidates in accordance with intra-party regulations (Article 10). While the statute also refers to internal elections, intra-party voting and other internal decision procedures, it is not stated whether and how these are applied to determining the list of candidates for EP elections.

Additional information about the formation of the party's electoral list was provided by Peep Mardiste, coordinator of the Green Party's 2009 EP election campaign and the second-ranked candidate on the party list for the upcoming EP elections.¹⁸⁷ The Party Board approved the procedures for selecting party candidates for the EP in spring 2008, stipulating that internal elections will be held to establish the electoral list. All members of the party had the right to set up candidates (including oneself).¹⁸⁸ The deadline for submitting the names of candidates for the internal elections was in June 2008 – a year before the elections.

As the number of proposed candidates was quite small initially, the party's leadership contacted additional party members to convince them to run. The fact that relatively few names were submitted was attributed to the early timing of the internal elections (the deadline for nominating candidates was a year before the EP elections), the fact that the party is a young organization, established in 2006, and the fact that EU-related issues are quite unfamiliar to many party members.¹⁸⁹ In the end, the party had 16 candidates for the 12 places on the electoral list.

Brief programmes/biographies of the candidates were posted on the party's intranet. In June 2008, party members voted on the candidates at the general assembly, the highest decision-making body of the party. Every party member had the right to participate in the internal elections. Each member had one vote. 262 members participated in the June 2008 meeting, which

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ The interview was conducted on January 12, 2009.

¹⁸⁸ The information about how and when to present the names of candidates was circulated mostly by email-lists and the intranet (3/4 of the party members regularly use e-mail).

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Peep Mardiste on January 12, 2009.

had the required quorum. The candidates were ranked according to the number of votes received.

According to the procedures established by the Board in Spring 2008 on drawing up the electoral list, the Party Board has the right to invite up to six individuals who are not members of the party to the electoral list to act as "vote-catchers". This opportunity was used and the Board brought in one candidate from outside the party. As the result, the candidate ranked as number 12 on the list according to the vote of the General Assembly was removed from the list and replaced by the person from outside the party.

The normal practice of the party also allowed the candidates to move themselves back on the party list (to accommodate candidates who are ready to help the party collect votes but do not want to become members of the EP). Two candidates (ranked as number 2 and 3 according to votes received at the General Assembly) used this opportunity and moved themselves to the end of the electoral list.

As the final step, the entire list has to be approved by the Party Council (end of January 2009), after which it will be made public. This procedure was the source of some intra-party controversy because the Council is a new institutional body, created only with the adoption of the new party statute at the party's General Assembly in June 2008 (i.e. *after* the adoption of the internal rules of procedures for drawing up the party list for 2009 EP elections). Originally, the rules of procedure had envisioned that the entire list would be approved by another general vote among party members. The candidate interviewed admitted that the decision to entrust the newly-created Council with the right to approve the final list gave source to extensive debates. As a compromise, the party will hold a non-binding vote among party members on the question of approving/rejecting the entire list.¹⁹⁰

Party position regarding open/closed lists: The Estonian Greens favor the open-list system but maintain that the upcoming elections should be held according to the system in place because it is too late to change the rules, once the game is on. The reasons for supporting the open-list system include reducing the importance of "party backroom politics," increasing democracy, boosting turnout, and ensuring compatibility with the existing systems for electing the national parliament and the local governments.

The question of „decoy ducks”: According to the party official interviewed, candidates ranked at the top of the party's electoral list have openly declared that they would indeed start work at the EP, if elected. Candidates without a serious intention to serve as members of the EP moved themselves to the end of the list.¹⁹¹

Impact of European political parties: The Estonian Greens are members of the European Green Party. According to the party official interviewed, this affiliation has strong impact on the content of the electoral platform (there will be an all-European manifest of the EGP) but virtually no impact on the internal process of candidate selection.

¹⁹⁰ The existing procedures do not specify what would happen if the list is rejected by party members during the non-binding vote. According to the party official interviewed, it is likely that by the time of the next EP elections, party procedures for drawing up the electoral list will be more detailed and formalized.

¹⁹¹ Interview with Peep Mardiste on January 12, 2009.

Estonian People's Union

The party statute contains the following provisions regarding the selection of party candidates to the EP: *The Party Council approves the list of candidates for Riigikogu and European Parliament elections.*¹⁹²

Tarvo Sarmet, Secretary General of the Party, clarified how the list of potential candidates, presented to the Council, is drawn up.¹⁹³ The party has 18 county-level regional organizations (one for each of the 15 counties and the three largest cities of Estonia). Each of these has the right to recommend candidates for inclusion in the party list.¹⁹⁴

Between August and October 2008, the county organizations held their regional conferences where, among other issues, the question of party candidate selection for EP elections was discussed. The regional conferences are attended by delegates elected from the local departments (smallest unit in the party structure). The decision process in the regional organizations was not formalized or uniform: in some cases, a vote was taken, in other cases, not. As a rule, voting occurred when there were conflicting opinions about the general approach to putting together the list (for instance, whether the list should be dominated by the "old" or "new" generation of politicians). Because there is a shared understanding that the maximum number of seats that the Party can hope to win in the upcoming elections is one, the discussion at the regional conferences generally focused on who should be the first-ranked candidate on the electoral list.

There was no fixed number of preferred candidates that each county organization had to submit, but as a rule, they submitted three names. Overall, 4-5 different names were suggested to the Council by the regional organizations. In some cases, there was active internal campaigning: potential candidates attended regional conferences or other regional or local events.

The Council meeting where the PU's electoral list will be approved will take place on March 21, 2009. According to the Secretary General of the PU, the Council is likely to follow the county organizations' preference regarding who should be number one on the list. It will have considerable autonomy in determining the second half of the list, since only 5 candidates were presented by the regional organizations.¹⁹⁵

Position on open vs. closed lists: The party takes the position that the rules of the game should not be changed once the game is on. In other words, the 2009 EP elections should take place according to the closed-list system, as decided by the *Riigikogu*. The party does not appear to have a clear long-term preference regarding open vs. closed lists. It is possible that the issue will be discussed after the elections.

Position on "decoy ducks": In selecting and ranking candidates, the party attributes particular importance to their vote-collecting potential and EU-related competence.¹⁹⁶ The Secretary General of the PU also noted that the ongoing rejuvenation process of the party has left a mark on candidate selection, as the electoral list is designed to reinforce the new public image of the

¹⁹² Statute of the People's Union of Estonia, available at <http://www.erl.ee/index.php?id=65>

¹⁹³ The interview was conducted by phone on January 14, 2009.

¹⁹⁴ The regional conferences can submit the names of any member of the party – i.e. they do not, as a rule, recommend individuals representing their own region.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Tarvo Sarmet on January 14, 2009.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

PU as a party of the young generation. The Secretary General preferred not to comment on the party's readiness to employ decoy ducks, referring to the fact that the party's electoral list has not yet been finalized.

Impact of European political parties: The PU is a member of the Alliance for Europe of the Nations. According to the Secretary General of the PU, the European-level party has no impact on candidate selection in the PU.

Conclusions and recommendations

The **level of formalization** of the candidate selection procedures in Estonian political parties appears to be medium. *The statutes* of Estonian political parties generally provide little information about the candidate selection process. The statute of the SDE is most detailed and explicit in this respect, stating that the party is obliged to hold internal elections, open to all party members, to determine its electoral list for the EP. The statute of the Centre Party also contains an article on internal elections but the elections are presented as a possibility, not a requirement. The statute of the RP stipulates that the list must be approved by the General Assembly but does not specify whether the assembly also ranks candidates. The statutes of the PU, PPRPU and the Greens simply state that the electoral lists must be approved by the Party Council.

All six parties appear to have some sort of *internal rules of procedure* specifying how the candidate list is drawn up.¹⁹⁷ In some cases (SDE) the document has been in force for more than one election period. In most cases, however, a new or separate regulation has been adopted specifically for the upcoming elections. The *ad hoc* character of these rules is underlined by the fact that in some cases, the actual procedures applied diverge from the adopted rules in important respects (the Greens) or that substantial amendments to the rules can be made a few months before the elections (SDE). In many cases, the internal regulations are rather general and do not prescribe a course of action for specific situations (e.g. conflicting opinions of party organs). Parties that hold internal elections to determine the list have more detailed procedures compared to parties where central party organs (Chairman, Board, Council) have considerable autonomy in determining the composition of the list.

The **level of centralization** of the candidate selection process varies from party to party. Overall, *internal elections* appear to be the norm and a reference point against which alternative procedures need to be justified. Four out of the six parties analyzed hold internal elections to determine the party list for EP elections (RP, CP, SDE, Greens). Candidates for internal elections can typically be nominated by regional party organizations and intra-party associations (CP, SDE, RP) or by any party member (Greens). While candidates are ranked according to the number of votes received in internal elections, this ranking is not necessarily final. Changes in the composition of the list can be made after the internal elections, typically by the Party Board or the Party Council (RP, Greens). Thus, the existing rules of procedure allow the central party organs to retain some control over election results and a degree of autonomy from the broader party organization. Changing the rules of procedure in order to reserve the top position in the list for the resigning Chairman (SDE) exemplify the same tendency of the party leadership to

¹⁹⁷ Because only one party provided access to its internal documents, the conclusions presented here are based on information provided by party officials during the interviews.

regard the results of internal elections as being potentially "suboptimal." Among the parties examined, the PPRPU clearly has the most centralized procedures of candidate selection. The electoral list is composed by the Party Chairman, who personally engages in negotiations with prospective candidates, and subsequently approved by the Party Board and the Council. The procedures used by the PU are also rather centralized – regional party organizations recommend potential candidates to the Party Council which then decides the composition of the list.

In terms of the **informal practices** of candidate selection used by the parties, the most problematic aspect is the practice of including "decoy ducks" in party lists, often as top-ranked candidates. The practice of enlisting candidates who do not intend to become members of the EP, if elected, reduces the transparency of elections and confuses the voters. The fact that the Estonian parties effectively engage in **electoral engineering** at the national level, switching the electoral laws back and forth between open and closed lists, often a few months before elections, strengthens the perception of the parties as opportunistic strategic actors.

This analysis leads to the following **recommendations**:

- the parties should make their rules of procedure concerning candidate selection public (e.g. accessible on the party's webpage);
- opportunistic electoral engineering should be avoided; in particular, the parties should refrain from changing the electoral system shortly before the elections;
- while the problem of "decoy ducks" is difficult to address by legal means (because the candidates' intentions cannot be externally ascertained), both national and European political institutions and actors could help foster a political culture in which candidates included in the party ballot would indeed be expected to become members of the European Parliament, if elected. In particular, European-level parties could play a more active role in establishing and promoting "standards of good practice and ethical behavior" in national parties (e.g. by encouraging transparency of the candidate selection procedures and by discouraging the use of decoy ducks).

Appendix: Party positions on open vs. closed lists and amendments to the EP Election Act

	Open-list PR	Closed-list PR
2004 (amendment to the EP Election Act enacting open lists passed in the Riigikogu)	Centre Party Pro Patria Union Res Publica Social Democratic Party	Reform Party People's Union
2006 (amendment changing the electoral system back to closed lists passed in <i>Riigikogu</i>)	Pro Patria Union Res Publica Social Democratic Party	Reform Party People's Union Centre Party
2008 (a bill proposing the re-adoption of open lists under discussion in <i>Riigikogu</i>)	Pro Patria and Res Publica Union Social Democratic Party Greens (founded in 2006) Centre Party	Reform Party People's Union

IRELAND

Background

Rules Governing elections to the European Parliament in Ireland

From June 2009 the number of seats available to Irish MEPs in the European Parliament will be reduced from 13 to 12 in accordance with the provisions laid down by the Treaty of Nice.¹⁹⁸ A 2007 Constituency Commission report therefore proposed “a reduction of a seat in the Dublin constituency for the European Parliament and the transfer of the population of counties Longford and Westmeath from the East to the North-West constituency”.¹⁹⁹ These recommendations were implemented in the Electoral Amendment Bill of 18 December 2008. As set out in the European Amendment Bill (2003), candidates will contest seats in four electoral constituencies. These are as follows:

- Dublin: 3 seats
- East: 3 seats
- South: 3 seats
- North-West: 3 seats



Constituency Boundaries, European Parliamentary Elections

At the time of writing, the precise date for the European Parliamentary election has yet to be announced. It will, however, take place between 4-7 June 2009, with the closing date for the registration of candidates expected to be approximately one month prior.

The legal basis for elections to the European Parliament in Ireland are set out in the Electoral Act 1992; the European Parliament Elections Acts 1997; the Electoral Act 1997; the Electoral (Amendment) Acts 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2004; the European Parliament Elections (Forms) Regulations 1998; and the European Parliament Elections (Amendment) Act 2004. The parliament is due to vote on the Electoral (Amendment) Bill 2008 at some stage before June 2009.

¹⁹⁸ See: Treaty of Nice 2004, Declarations Adopted by the Conference, 20.

¹⁹⁹ Constituency Commission Report on Dáil and European Parliament Constituencies 2007, Stationery Office, Dublin.

The rules governing the nomination of candidates can be summarised as follows:

- candidates of a political party must be nominated by their party;
- independent candidates may nominate themselves but their nomination must either be supported by 60 signatures (of persons on the electoral register in the same constituency) or they must make a deposit of €1800;
- no-one may stand in more than one constituency;
- any EU citizen aged 21 or over who is resident in Ireland and in full possession of his/her right to stand as a candidate in his/her Member State of origin may stand for election; and
- parties or non-party candidates should also present a list of replacement candidates, so if they are elected and leave the European Parliament, the person highest on the replacement list who is both eligible and willing to become an MEP can replace them.

The Proportional Representation Single Transferable Vote (PR STV) electoral system was specified in the (1937) Constitution for elections in Ireland. This is important for the purposes of this study as this system, used by only Ireland, Malta and Northern Ireland within the EU, does not involve the formation of party lists.

Rather, under the rules of the PR STV electoral system candidates are nominated to stand in a particular electoral constituency. Voters in a constituency may cast his/her vote for one candidate and in addition indicate, in order of preference, the candidate(s) to whom his/her vote is to be transferred if the first preference candidate has already reached the quota or has obtained too few votes and has thus been eliminated.

A candidate is elected once he or she has reached the quota. Any votes accruing to a candidate in excess of the quota are redistributed on a proportional basis among the remaining candidates in accordance with the preferences expressed by the voters.

The Irish Political Parties

The political parties which shall be considered in this study are those political parties with representation in the Irish parliament.²⁰⁰ They are, in order of seats held in the current parliament:

Fianna Fáil (FF): member of the Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN) group in the European Parliament, Fianna Fáil has been the largest party in Dáil Éireann since 1932. They have been in government since 1997 having led three successive coalition governments. Fianna Fáil is considered broadly centrist in ideology and substantive ideological differences exist between it and the more nationalist and right-of-centre UEN in which it sits.

Fine Gael (FG): member of the European Peoples Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED) group in the European Parliament, Fine Gael are the second largest party in Dáil Éireann, and currently the main opposition party. Fine Gael is also a broadly centrist and perhaps the most pro-European party in Ireland, with the goal of “advancing the ideal of European unity” specifically set out in the party’s guiding principles.²⁰¹ The party has been the second largest in Dáil Éireann since 1932 has lead several coalition governments.

²⁰⁰ The Progressive Democrats party was officially dissolved on 28 February 2009.

²⁰¹ Guiding Principles, Fine Gael Constitution and Rules, 2006.

Labour Party: member of the Party of European Socialists (PES) group in the European Parliament, Labour are Ireland's third largest political grouping, having won 10% of the national vote and 20 T.D.s (members of Dáil Éireann, the house of representatives) in the general election of 2007. The Labour Party is centre-left in ideology and has served in government for a total of nineteen years, six times in coalition either with Fine Gael alone or with Fine Gael and other smaller parties, and once with Fianna Fáil.

Green Party (GP): member of the European Green Party-European Free Alliance group (Greens-EFA) group in the European Parliament, the Greens are currently the fourth largest party in Dáil Éireann with 6 members, having won 5% of the national vote in the general election of 2007. They currently serve as the junior coalition partner in government with Fianna Fáil – the first time the Irish Green Party have served in government in Ireland. The Party's ideology can be described as left/environmentalist. The Lisbon Treaty was the first European treaty that the Green party did not officially oppose, although they did not officially campaign in favour of the Treaty.

Sinn Féin (SF): member of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) group in the European Parliament, Sinn Féin are currently the fifth largest party in Dáil Éireann with four sitting T.D.s (although they won a higher portion of first preference votes than the Green Party in the 2007 general election). Its political ideology is left/republican (nationalist). It is currently the second largest party in the Northern Assembly – the devolved parliament of Northern Ireland. They are the only party in Dáil Éireann to oppose the Lisbon Treaty.

The current standing of these political parties in the European Parliament is set out below.

	Dublin	Leinster	North West	South
Fine Gael 	Gay Mitchell	Avril Doyle and Mairead McGuinness	Jim Higgins	Simon Coveney ²⁰²
Fianna Fáil 	Eoin Ryan	Liam Aylward	Seán Ó Neachtain	Brian Crowley
Labour 	Proinsias de Rossa			
Sinn Féin ²⁰³ 	Mary Lou McDonald			
Green 				
Independents 			Marian Harkin	Kathy Sinnott

European Parliament Election Results, 2004

The Progressive Democrats, will not be considered as they were officially dissolved on 28 February 2009 and will therefore not be standing candidates in the upcoming European Elections.

²⁰² Replaced by Colm Burke since the general election of 2007.

²⁰³ Sinn Féin are also represented by Bairbre de Brún in Northern Ireland.

Although the **Socialist Party** will probably field at least one candidate, they did not receive above 2% in either the last general election or the European Parliamentary election in 2004, and are therefore also precluded.

Libertas, a recently established political party with currently no representation at either local or national levels, will likely run at least one candidate in the upcoming elections to the European Parliament. They have not contested any elections to date and have not established formal rules and procedures for the selection of candidates and cannot therefore be considered.

Fianna Fáil

Formal Rules and Procedures

Fianna Fáil rules for the selection of candidates to stand in elections are laid down by a document entitled ‘Constitution and Revised Rules 2006’.²⁰⁴ In the case of elections to the European Parliament, “the Ard Chomhairle (National Executive) shall determine the number of candidates from each constituency”.²⁰⁵ In the case where the Ard Comhairle decides to run more than one candidate, a separate selection convention will be organised for candidates “from a particular area”. Nominated candidates may not be present at the convention while the vote is taking place.

The Ard Comhairle, or the Constituencies Committee²⁰⁶ acting on its behalf, decides the date of the convention and the closing date for receipt of nominations. Every registered Fianna Fáil Cumann (branch), Comhairle Ceantair (local executive; roughly equivalent to a local electoral area), and Comhairle Dáil Cheantair (parliamentary constituency executive) and Ógra Fianna Fáil branch (representing young members of the party) may nominate one candidate to be considered for selection and also nominate one person for the replacement panel. To be validly nominated for either position, 20 nominations must be secured.

Where a selection convention is directed to select a number of candidates less than the number of nominees received, a ballot is prepared. Voting at conventions will be by proportional representation single transferable vote rules (the same system employed in national elections, as described in 2 (ii) above). A ballot paper will also be prepared for the Replacement Candidates’ Panel in the event of a contest. The holding of District Conventions (conventions in geographical sub-divisions of a constituency) may also be held if the Ard Comhairle so decides. Candidates must sign a pledge to stand for the European Parliament where they pledge to consult on all important matters and abide by decisions made, or instructions issued, by the Party Leader.

The Ard Comhairle must ratify all selected candidates. It may also select candidates itself if “the state of the Organisation is not such as would enable a representative Selection Convention to be held” and can “add a name or names to the panel of candidates officially nominated”.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ Constitution and Revised Rules 2006, Fianna Fáil, Dublin 2006.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p21

²⁰⁶ This is a rather secretive committee whose members are handpicked by the Party Leader. It is thought to be made up of the Deputy Leader, several senior party (cabinet) members, the General Secretary of the party, as well as senior election advisors/gurus such as P.J. Mara. Its exact constituency is never disclosed.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 25

Informal Rules and Procedures

It is commonly acknowledged within Fianna Fáil that a candidate with a high profile is more likely to be successful in elections to the European Parliament (where there is a requirement to gain a much larger number of votes across a wider geographical region than would be the case in national elections). It was therefore acknowledged by party members interviewed that it was almost essential to be a sitting T.D. (member of the house of representatives), an MEP, or perhaps an ex-T.D to receive the party's nomination.

According to Aidan O'Gorman, Director of Organisation Development within Fianna Fáil, it is *de facto* necessary to "be anointed" by the Party Leader in order to secure the party's nomination. The Party Leader can exercise considerable power through the Constituencies Committee to determine an election strategy, propose the candidature of a particular persons with a high public profile, and to communicate this message through to grass roots level. Interviews with potential candidates have occurred in advance of the selection conventions and the deliberation of the Constituencies Committee are not necessarily disclosed to the Ard Comhairle or the wider political party.

The power of incumbency is also very strong. Mr. O'Gorman suggested that it was likely that the four sitting Fianna Fáil T.D.s would stand for re-election and that in these circumstances it would be "very rare" for them to be opposed for the nomination in their constituency. This did, however, happen in 2004 in the North-West where Seán Ó Neachtain was challenged by Frank Fahy for the party nomination in the southern (Galway) area of the constituency, thereby triggering the convening of a Selection Convention.

Mr. O'Gorman also acknowledged the increased importance of the replacement list. Whereas the list was formerly determined by convention, the Constituencies Committee now determines the order of candidates to be included on the replacement list.

Influence of Alliance for Europe of the Nations (AEN)

None of the party members with whom nomination procedures were discussed were aware of any influence that the AEN had on Fianna Fáil's procedures for the selection of candidates. According to Aidan O'Gorman, there was "absolutely not" a role. In fact, there was no awareness of the rules that other members of the grouping used to select candidates. This was attributed by Aidan O'Gorman to both the loose ideological fit between the AEN and Fianna Fáil, as well as the general perception that the selection of candidates is exclusively a matter for Fianna Fáil itself.

Fine Gael

Formal Rules and Procedures

The rules and procedures for the selection of Fine Gael candidates to stand in the European Parliamentary elections are set out in the party Constitution & Rules' of Fine Gael.²⁰⁸ These rules are interpreted by Fine Gael's Executive Council in the form of standing orders and internal communications to various branches of the party.

²⁰⁸ Fine Gael Constitution and Rules, 22-5-2005.

According to the Constitution, candidates for election to the European Parliament “shall be selected by Conventions comprising delegates from each Dáil Constituency with the number of delegates approximately proportionate to the population of each constituency”. The Executive Council decided that to gain a nomination to go before a Fine Gael selection convention, a candidate would require a nomination from five district executives (nomination from a constituency executive would count as two district executive nominations²⁰⁹). No more than three district executive nominations are permissible from any one constituency.²¹⁰

The Executive Council also ruled that each delegate to a Selection Convention would be granted 20 votes for each European Parliament seat in the constituency he represents, i.e. a delegate from a four-seat constituency has 80 votes, while those representing a three seat constituency would have 60.²¹¹ Arrangements for such Conventions shall be made by the Executive Council”.²¹²

The National Executive also has the power to establish a number of election committees, one of which is the European Election Committee. This committee decides how many candidates will stand in a particular constituency and the geographical distribution of Conventions. A Constituency or constituencies may be precluded from voting in the Convention if “in the opinion of the Executive Council, such constituency has failed to assist in fundraising activity or otherwise failed to carry out instructions issued”.²¹³

The Executive Council may, on the proposal of a party leader, ratify candidates selected by conventions to local, European and parliamentary elections. In addition, it may “add and/or delete and/or substitute a candidate at any election to those selected by the convention”.²¹⁴ It may also “require (after consultation with the relevant constituency office board) that a selection convention shall select candidates in accordance with such geographical considerations as may be determined by the Executive Council”. It shall also, on the proposal of the party leader, “determine what measures shall be taken in the event of the death, incapacity or withdrawal any candidate who has previously been selected at a convention”.²¹⁵

Informal Rules and Procedures

According to Terry Murphy, Dublin Director and member of Party Management Team, there is “a need for big names because European elections are personality and media driven”. A lot of the work on selecting candidates would therefore be done far in advance of conventions “at a high level in the party and wouldn’t be known or discussed widely”.

This would include identifying candidates, doing background research on the ground in each constituency, etc. Views would be formed on the best number of candidates, geographical spread, and appeal of various candidates. These and other pertinent issues are discussed in the European Election Committee, which is constituted by the party’s chief strategists and campaign managers, the leader of the party, the party Chairman, and several other high level full time staff

²⁰⁹ A District Executive corresponds to Local Authority Electoral Areas. The Constituency Executive plays a role similar to District Executive, but at a level which corresponds to parliamentary election constituency areas.

²¹⁰ Clarified in conversation with Fine Gael Head of Internal Communication, Vincent Gribben.

²¹¹ European Convention Rules 2009, Fine Gael Internal Memo.

²¹² Fine Gael Constitution and Rules, Part IV, European Elections, p 22

²¹³ Fine Gael Constitution and Rules, Part IV, European Elections, p 22.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ Part VII, Executive Council, 44A, p 25.

from party headquarters. The Executive Council would not necessarily be party to these discussions.

The candidates preferred by the European Election Committee have a strong chance of securing the Party's nomination, but the democratic rules and procedures ensure a relatively democratic process that may throw up surprises from time to time. In the 2004 election, for example, a relatively unknown candidate nearly secured the nomination at the expense of the high-profile and "anointed" candidate, Gay Mitchell, a sitting MEP. According to Mr. Murphy, the decision of a convention is effectively binding because although technically a candidate can be deselected by the National Executive, "this would be politically impossible in practice".

In relation to the replacement list, these were traditionally selected at convention, but the ordering of the list is now determined by party headquarters. The rational behind this, it appears, is to avoid a situation whereby a relatively unknown candidate might replace a sitting MEP who steps down and is subsequently unable to hold the seat for the party.

The power to determine the date of conventions was also highlighted as an informal power, as party headquarters would be reluctant to announce a convention unless it was happy that the right number of suitable candidates were in place. An example of this power in recent times was the postponement of the Selection Convention for the East area following sitting MEP Avril Doyle's surprise announcement that she would not be running for re-election to the European Parliament.

Influence of the European People's Party

According to Mr. Murphy, the EPP "don't have any direct bearing on candidate selection". He pointed out that there were "lots of contacts with EPP at political level and at organisational level, including meetings of campaign managers, meetings of manifesto issues, organisational issues, etc.". In general, the exchange of best practice and reporting on campaigns after elections were common, but selection rules and procedures were very much something for Fine Gael themselves. He identified the different voting systems used in Ireland and other EU countries as a possible barrier to closer cooperation.

Labour Party

Formal Rules and Procedures

In Article 13.2 of the Labour Party's Constitution (which deals with elections), the National Executive Council (NEC) of the Labour Party²¹⁶ is granted to power to "proscribe the procedure for selection of party candidates". This process must have "due regard, in the case of European Elections, for procedures agreed by the PES".²¹⁷

²¹⁶ The National Executive Committee of the Labour Party is made up of 15 members elected at the annual party conference from various groups such as Labour Women, Labour Youth, Labour Equality and the Labour Trade Union Group, as well as the Party Leader, Deputy Leader, the president, Chairperson and Treasurer.

²¹⁷ Irish Labour Party Constitution, as amended November 2007, available at:

<http://www.labour.ie/party/constitution.html>

The current rules and procedures are set out in Standing Orders for the Selection Conventions for Elections to the European Parliament, adopted by the NEC on 20 September 2008.²¹⁸ These rules specify that the NEC's powers extend to deciding whether selection conventions themselves are required or if the selection is to be by postal ballot.

According to the rules and procedures, nominations must be proposed and seconded by branches registered to a constituency wholly or partly within the European Parliamentary constituency concerned, and the proposing and seconding must come from different Dáil constituencies.

The Organisation Sub-Committee (which is appointed along with several other sub-committees by the NEC), may recommend a number of candidates to be selected to contest a particular seat. In the case where more than one candidate is to be selected, the committee may prescribe "outcomes with regard to the gender balance of the panel of candidates selected". If a poll is required (where there are more nominees than recommended by the NEC), a Returning Officer is appointed to oversee the postal vote or voting at the Selection Convention.

If a Selection Convention disagrees with the position of the NEC or the Organisation sub-committee, it must proceed as directed, but may make alternative recommendations regarding the number of candidates to be selected or the criteria for selection. The Party Leader and Chairman of the party will consider these recommendations and decide accordingly.

The power to ratify the selection of any particular candidate proposed by a selection convention rests with the NEC. The Party leader and Chairman may decide, acting jointly, at the behest of the NEC or the Organisation Sub-Committee, to add a candidate to those selected by the Selection Convention or postal ballot.

Informal Rules and Procedures

Within Labour it is accepted that only a candidate with a very high profile would have any chance of getting elected. The party hierarchy, through the Organisation Sub-Committee, would ensure that such suitable candidates were in place. The power of incumbency is also very strong, with the selection of Proinsias de Rossa, for example, considered little more than a formality.

Influence of the Party of European Socialists

In an interview with Ms Eta McCauliff, Acting Secretary-General of the Labour Party, she stated that despite the reference to PES in the Labour Party Constitution, the PES exercises no influence on the rules and procedures for selecting candidates for European election. This was very much seen as a matter for the Labour Party.

Ms McCauliff did point out that Proinsias de Rossa, Labour Party MEP, in his role as Vice-President of the PES, would have significant influence in drafting the PES manifesto for the upcoming elections and the Labour Party in Ireland will draw heavily on this manifesto for its European Parliamentary campaign.

²¹⁸ This document is not publicly available.

Formal Rules and Procedures

The formal rules and procedures for the selection of Green Party candidates to stand in elections are set out in the party's 'Rules and Procedures for Selection Conventions' document, as amended at the National Council meeting of 14 June 2008.²¹⁹

For the purpose of Green Party Selection conventions, four units of the party organisation play a role: the Local Group, Constituency Group, Regional Council and the National Executive Committee. The body to call a Selection Convention shall be as in article 9.1 of the Constitution.²²⁰ Accordingly, a Selection Convention will be called by the body at the lowest level, which covers the entire electoral area concerned. This body is the National Executive Committee in the case of elections to the European Parliament.

The National Executive Committee convenes the selection meeting at a date of its choosing and appoints a Returning Officer. It shall decide the number of candidates to be chosen, and whether substitutes will be chosen at the same Convention as the candidate. The Selection Convention itself may, however, overrule such decisions whether made by the convening body or the Returning Officer.

The Returning Officer establishes a list of valid voters and sends a circular to all eligible persons to inform them of this and invite candidates to declare themselves. The National Executive Committee itself also has the right to propose a candidate. Candidates who have declared themselves shall be given the current list of registered voters within one week following their declaration.

In the event of only one nomination being received, the Returning Officer may decide not to proceed with the selection convention, but members further to being informed of the proposed candidate, may call a meeting to discuss. If there is no consensus, the nomination may be decided by a two-thirds majority. If none of the options obtains a two-thirds majority then the selection process is abandoned without a candidate being selected.

If there is a selection convention called, the Selection Convention may take decisions about procedure, including overruling the convening body or the Returning Officer. Candidates should be invited to address the Selection Convention.²²¹ The balloting shall be by secret ballot, and the list of substitutes shall be in the order of the preferendum result.

The National Executive Committee may exercise its right to reject a candidate at any stage. It may delegate this right to a committee or task force. The rejected candidate has one month in which to appeal to the Appeals Committee. The National Executive Committee has the right to reconvene a Selection Convention and propose a candidate to stand in addition to the candidate(s) previously selected. In this event the candidate(s) already selected shall continue as

²¹⁹ Rules and Procedures for Selection Conventions document, as amended at the National Council meeting of 14 June 2008. This document is not publicly available.

²²⁰ Green Party Constitution as amended by Annual Convention April 2008 available at: http://www.greenparty.ie/about/structures/green_party_constitution

²²¹ There is a distinction made between "rules" and "recommendations" in the Rules and Procedures for Selection Conventions (as amended at the National Council meeting of 14 June 2008) document. In this case, a "recommendation" is referred to.

candidate(s) and the Selection Convention shall decide by consensus or two-thirds majority if it wishes the extra candidate to stand in addition. The National Executive Committee is the final arbitrating authority in disputes over rules and procedures.

Informal Rules and Procedures

In an interview with Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, General-Secretary of the Green Party, the Election Task Force, which is a sub-committee of NEC, is described a key committee where the nomination of candidates for election is concerned.

The National Executive appoints this Sub-Committee after each general election. It is made up of the Party Chairman, Head of Communications, a representative from the parliamentary party (who may not necessarily be leader of the party) and a representative of the party Local Councillors and several “well seasoned campaigners”.

This body sets an election strategy for the coming election cycle. For example, according to Mr. Ó Caomhánaigh “in 2007 we assessed the situation after the general election and we thought that it would be hard to win a seat, and although it may have been tempting to concentrate on the local elections, the European elections would be very high profile. It was felt by the Committee that the Progressive Democrats²²² had made a mistake in 2004 as it took them off the stage completely. It was therefore thought important to select two high profile candidates”. As it transpires, this is exactly how it has worked out with Senators Déirdre de Búrca and Dan Boyle receiving the party’s nomination to run further to two uncontested Selection Conventions.

The key informal power, according to Mr. Ó Caomhánaigh, is the power to determine the date of a Selection Convention, and “it is always the policy not to call a Selection Convention until the Election Task Force is happy” he added.

Influence of the European Greens

Mr. Ó Caomhánaigh thought that the rules and procedures had evolved internally in a “learning by doing” fashion. Relations to the UK Greens have traditionally been very close and there would certainly have been some cross-germination of ideas between these two organisations. Mr. Ó Caomhánaigh was not aware of any role that the European Greens played the formation of rules and procedures for the selection of candidates, although there was a lot of interaction and dialogue on the European Green Party manifestos. He felt that in the event of a harmonised voting system, there might then perhaps be a case then for more harmonisation of selection procedures.

Sinn Féin

Formal Rules and Procedures

According to the Sinn Féin Constitution and Rules,²²³ the Ard Chomhairle (Executive Council) of the party governs when the Ard Fhéis is not sitting and is made up of twelve members elected at the Ard Fhéis and an officer board consisting of a President, a General Secretary, a Treasurer,

²²² Recently disbanded.

²²³ Sinn Féin Constitution and Rules, 2005

a Director of publicity and a party Chair. It may also establish a Comhairle Chúige, or bodies established on a regional basis.

Rules governing Selection Conventions are to be drawn up and made available from headquarters to all bodies. The relevant Comhairle Chúige "shall have responsibility for all EU, Assembly, Westminster, and Leinster House (Irish Parliamentary) elections". It must convene a Selection Convention subject to the rules drawn up by the Ard Comhairle. It must also pass on the names of candidates selected to an Election Department. In the case of all Parliamentary elections, all candidates must be interviewed by a panel of 5 people established by the Ard Comhairle before receiving the Party Nomination.

Informal Rules and Procedures

Sinn Féin were not available for comment.

Influence of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left

Sinn Féin were not available for comment, although it is highly unlikely that this grouping would have any influence over Sinn Féin's rules for the selection of candidates.

Conclusions

The formal rules of Irish political parties for the nomination and selection of candidates to contest European Parliamentary elections follow a relatively similar process. All parties require candidates to receive nominations from members or branches of the party; nominated candidates must pass through selection conventions; and the national executives must ratify nominations. Party hierarchies also officially determine the number of candidates and the geographical distribution of candidates.

Informally, the party hierarchy plays a central role in determining who will be selected. The nature of elections to the European Parliament – thought by members of the political parties to be personality and media driven – has a strong influence in the types of candidates thought suitable. Parties will generally form a clear idea on who they think would fit the profile of a successful candidate, and will ensure that suitable candidates are in place before a selection convention is called.

Although party groups formed within the European Parliament are important in several ways for Irish political parties contesting European Parliamentary elections, there is no sign either of a European influence in the candidate selection process, nor that Irish parties would be willing to relinquish any significant role to pan-European parties.

The use of PR STV voting system in Ireland makes it difficult for any practical "Europeanisation" of the selection process to occur. Irrespective of the voting system, there was a strong feeling among party members interviewed that the selection of candidates is something for national parties acting alone, and that there was little rational for harmonisation of procedures. There is therefore every likelihood that decisions about nomination and selection of candidates will remain in the hands of national politicians, influenced by their own interests and their existing national traditions, for the foreseeable future.

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GREECE

Greece can be characterised as a quasi-two-party system in a five-party national Parliament, since there are two main parties with the capacity to gain control of government separately, while history provides only few examples of coalition governments. In fact, the party system is dominated by the liberal-conservative Nea Dimokratia (ND) and the centre-left Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK). Other significant parties that are represented in the European Parliament are the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), the oldest party in the Greek political scene, the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA), a coalition of left political parties and the Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS), a Greek right-wing populist/nationalist political party.

This section describes and analyzes the procedures applied by national political parties to establish their electoral lists. Nea Dimokratia provides for the selection of MEP candidates "directly by the Party Chairman" (Art. 21 para 1 of its Statutes). PASOK organises primary elections for the selection of MEPs (Art. 50 of the Statutes). The Greek Communist Party designates MEP candidates by decision of its Central Committee (Art. 43 of the Statutes), but only after "the opinion of local Party organisations or of organs the candidates serve on is taken". Synaspismos starts the selection procedure with "suggestions of candidatures by members or by Party organs" (Art. 13 of the Statutes), which are then put to "country-wide internal primaries, to which are entitled to participate [Party] members". LAOS designates its candidates for the European elections (Art. 18 of the Statutes) by decision of its Political Council.

Regardless of the institutional framework of Greek political parties participating to the EP elections (either with success in obtaining MEP seats or close-enough to obtaining such Euro-presence), the choices made of MEP candidates have been most often dictated by four main concerns:

- Granting to party loyalists (and/or party leadership-friendly middle-ranking political personalities) a graceful exit or a gilded exile from mainstream national political life.
- Providing party hopefuls or promising allies of the party leadership with an outward-looking, "European"/international training ground so as to prepare them for higher/more central office in the national political scene.
- Allowing political and/or social-life worthies an attractive stunt of "European life".
- Providing party leadership with the opportunity to apply political principles or to make moves laden with political symbolism.

The Greek national parties under examination are members of five European political groups (out of the seven currently established EP political groups): the European People's Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED), the Party of European Socialists (PES), the European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE-NGL) and Independence/ Democracy (I/D). It should be mentioned that the Greek section of Ecogreens is member of the European Green Party (EGP). Still, the overall level of "European content" in the functioning and in the campaigns of Greek-European Parliament parties remains quite low. The political discourse of Greek national parties approaches the political discourse of the European groups they belong to, however not to a great extent. As far as the impact of the European political parties on the selection procedures is concerned, it is neither great nor non-existent. The impact of the Greek national parties on the selection procedures is more a question of "modernization" of the elite of a party rather than a

question of Europeanization derived from the participation in the specific European political group.

Introduction

In Greece as in several other EU countries, the campaign for the European elections and the positions taken during the pre-election period by the candidates of the parties, as well as the overall content of the campaign, are not centred on European affairs. Thus, they do not contribute to the transmission of the positions of the European parties to national political life. The political parties do not run a European campaign since in almost all Member States, citizens do not use European Parliament elections to effectively voice their preferences over EU-level political alternatives. Rather, they express their opinions on national parties, national politicians, and national policy issues. Therefore, the campaign preceding the European elections is mainly restricted to domestic politics; this is especially visible in the case of Greece.

In a genuine system of competitive party democracy, the political parties, in view of the European elections, would compete on the issues of the EU agenda. Voting should take place in the light of opposite policies or differences of the candidates. This is not the case for European elections. European political groups are not parties, but looser coalitions. Groups may be based around a single European political party or they can include more than one European party or Independents. Each Group is assumed to have a set of core principles. According to the rules set for the formation of European political groups (Rule 29, European Parliament's Rules of Procedure) a European Political group, among other things, should have MEPs in at least one-fifth of the Member States and should be composed by at least twenty MEPs. This rule may enforce the European Political Parties to enlarge the number of the participating members in detriment of political cohesion in order to fulfill the criteria and to form a European political group.

The political parties would have the incentives to run a European campaign, if the stakes in European Parliament elections were significantly higher than they are now, for example if the outcome of European elections had a more direct effect on the direction of the EU policy agenda. That is, winning electoral options could be directly translated into executive action at the European level through the cohesive political parties. European Parliament does not form a government in the traditional sense and its politics have developed over consensual rather than adversarial lines. Furthermore, no single group has ever held a majority in the European Parliament.

The «blocked list» system does not favour the active involvement of the candidates in European elections campaign nor the closeness of MEPs to their electorate. In most Member States, citizens do not use European Parliament elections to reward or punish individual MEPs for their activities, involvement, policy positions or behaviour in the European Parliament. Therefore, the candidates do not have the incentive to raise their personal profile amongst the electorate.

This study is going to describe and analyse²²⁴ the procedures applied by the Greek national political parties in order to establish their electoral lists for the European elections. The manner in which parties fulfill their recruiting function and, eventually, the quality of the politicians, in the national and the European level, directly depends on these procedures. Furthermore, the possible impact of the European political parties and the political groups in the European Parliament on these procedures is going to be evaluated. Finally, the paper reaches a number of conclusions.

The selection of candidates for the EP by the Greek national parties

Greece can be characterised as a quasi-two-party system in a five-party national Parliament, since there are two main parties with the capacity to gain control of government separately while history provides only few examples of coalition governments. In fact, the party system is dominated by the liberal-conservative Nea Dimokratia (ND) and the centre-left Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PA.SO.K.). Other significant parties that are represented in the European Parliament are the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), the oldest party in the Greek political scene, the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA), a coalition of left political parties and the Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS), a Greek right-wing populist/nationalist political party.

The procedures applied by national parties to establish their electoral lists

Nea Dimokratia (ND) as well as PA.SO.K. were founded in 1974 after the restoration of democracy. ND is the main centre-right political party in Greece and a pro-european one. Under ND leadership Greece joined the European Communities in 1981, criticised by opposing parties. ND has 11 MEPs in the European Parliament (out of 25) and it is member of the largest political group of the European Parliament, the Group of European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats (EPP/ED). ND is a member of the International Democrat Union (IDU) and the Christian Democrat International (CDI). It should be pointed out that, at the last national elections (26/9/2007), ND won 41.84% and is in power since 2004. Nea Dimokratia, provides (art 21 para 1 of its Statutes²²⁵) for the selection of MEP candidates "directly by the Party Chairman". Party sources explain that, in practice, a selection procedure having analogies with the one in place for the selection of national MP candidates (art. 21 para 2) whereby local committees push candidatures up to the Political Council of the party, which then are presented to the Chairman, is also followed for MEPs.

PA.SO.K. is a member of the Party of European Socialists and the Socialist International. Since 2006 the President of PA.SO.K., Georges Papandreou is President of the Socialist International. In the European Parliament PA.SO.K. has 8 out of 24 Greek MEPs. After a long period of selection of MEPs at the discretion of the Party leadership (the Chairman and the Political Council), PASOK – the center-left, Social democratic Party that was in power from 1982 to 1983 and from 1993 to 2004 – now provides for primary elections for the selection of MEPs (art. 50 of

²²⁴ It should be mentioned that EKEME produced in November 2008 a questionnaire and sent it by post and by e-mail to the persons in charge of the European and International Affairs Sections of the six main political parties in Greece in order to clarify their current practices and get information on informal communication and steps preparing candidate selection, as required by the Specifications of this study. EKEME has contacted several times the respective offices of the parties mentioned below. Only PA.SO.K. and the Greek Section of the Ecogreens have promptly reacted to our questionnaire. However, it should be pointed out that, since the beginning of December and for more than a month the riots in Greece have dominated domestic politics.

²²⁵ Statute of the party, See www.nd.gr/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=80&Item id=241

the Statutes²²⁶). This system of candidates' selection through primaries is in place for national MPs, but "may be decided also for MEPs" (para 4 of art. 50). To such primaries have a right to participate Party Members but also Party "Friends" (who may register the very day of such primaries). In case "holding primaries is not possible", a Committee for Candidatures takes the decision "following deliberation with local Party organs"; its decision is then finalised by the Party National Council. Standing MEPs' reelection, as well as any MEP candidates emanating from electoral alliances, are decided by decision of the National Council (art 50 para 3).

The **Greek Communist Party** (KKE - steadfastly anti-EU) was founded in 1918 as the Socialist Labour Party of Greece and was renamed as the Greek Communist Power in 1924. The Greek Communist party has representatives in the European Parliament, where its 3 MEPs sit with the European United Left - Nordic Green Left. The Greek Communist Party is a fervent opponent of the European Union. It designates MEP candidates by decision of its Central Committee (art 43 of the Statutes²²⁷), but after "the opinion of local Party organisations or of organs the candidates serve on is taken". It is clearly stipulated that MEPs hold their office "at the disposal of the Party".

The process ending up in the formation of **SYRIZA** can be traced back to the Space for Dialogue for the Unity and Common Action of the Left formed in 2001. In the European elections of 2004, SYRIZA elected one MEP. The "Space" provided the common ground from which the participating parties could work together on issues such as: neoliberal reform of the pension and social security systems as well as opposition to new anti-terrorist laws. The Coalition of the Left and Progress (Synaspismos) is the biggest party participating in the Space. **Synaspismos** is not an anti-european party. It belongs to the Left/Nordic Green Left Group (GUE/NGL), the sixth most powerful political group in the European Parliament. The selection procedure of MEPs for left-wing Coalition of the Radical Left- Synaspismos (earlier considered "Eurocommunist" in political tendency) starts with "suggestions of candidatures by members or by Party organs" (art 13 of the Statutes²²⁸), which are then put to a "country-wide internal primaries, to which are entitled to participate [Party] members". According to art 13 e, there is a maximum of two consecutive terms of office for MEP; after a break, re-election for two more terms is possible. The Political Central Committee of the Party keeps the right to decide that MEPs elected may have to give up their seats for other candidates further down the Eurolist (art 13 f), but such decision must be taken before the primaries are held.

The **Popular Orthodox Rally** (Laikos Orthodoxos Synagermos - LAOS), a Greek right-wing populist/nationalist and eurosceptical political party, was founded and led by journalist Georgios Karatzafiris in 2000, a few months after he was expelled from the centre-right New Democracy. LAOS is member of the Independence/Democracy Group political group of the European Parliament and has one MEP, elected for the first time in 2004. In addition, in the national elections of 16 September 2007, LAOS entered the Greek Parliament for the first time with 10 seats. LAOS designates its candidates for the European elections (article 18 of the Statutes²²⁹) by decision of its Political Council. The Chairman of the party makes the final evaluation, formulation and approval of the list of candidates.

²²⁶ See Statutes of Panhellenic Socialist Movement, 19/06/2008 <http://www.pasok.gr/portal/gr/30/59149/3/7/1/showdoc.html> (greek) and <http://en.pasok.gr/?cat=9> (English)

²²⁷ «Καταστατικό του Συναπούρου της Αριστεράς των Κινημάτων και της Οικολογίας», 16-17 April 2005, See http://www.syn.gr/downloads/SYN_katastatiko.pdf

²²⁸ «Καταστατικό του Συναπούρου της Αριστεράς των Κινημάτων και της Οικολογίας», 16-17 April 2005, See http://www.syn.gr/downloads/SYN_katastatiko.pdf

²²⁹ Καταστατικό του κόμματος Αδίκος Ορθόδοξος Συναγερμός, See ['pdf/](http://www.laos.gr/laos.asp?epilogi)

The procedure followed by the Party of Ecogreens²³⁰ is not going to be taken into consideration since the party has not obtained more than 2% in the previous national or European elections, a percentage required²³¹ in order to include the party in the procedure, although recent opinion polls show a significant rise of its popularity.

A brief overview of the candidates' profiles from 1984 till 2004

Regardless of the institutional framework (or: of the self-proclaimed institutional framework) of Greek political parties participating to the EP elections (either with success in obtaining MEP seats or close-enough to obtaining such Euro-presence), the choices made of MEP candidates have been most often dictated by four main concerns:

- Granting to party loyalists (and/or party leadership-friendly middle-ranking political personalities) a graceful exit or a gilded exile from mainstream national political life.
- Providing party hopefuls or promising allies of the party leadership with an outward-looking, "European"/international training ground so as to prepare them for higher/more central office in the national political scene.
- Allowing political and/or social-life worthies a perk-laden stunt of "European life".
- Providing party leadership with the opportunity to apply political principles or to make moves laden with political symbolism.

Looking backwards from the present, it is possible to track a number of individual careers of MEPs that illustrate the preceding points.

From the ranks of Nea Dimokratia, in the latest Eurolist one finds for instance Yannis Varvitsiotis, a long-standing Party grandee who was instrumental in bringing the current Party leader Kostas Karamanlis to power; also in the present EP, an important figure of Nea Dimokratia, Antonis Samaras, obtained political sanctuary after having left (in the Nineties) the party fold. Samaras then came to the national political scene and is presently one of the potential successors of Karamanlis. Earlier on, the Nea Dimokratia Eurolist hosted Christos Folias, an entrepreneur and business unionist (later to become Minister for Development) or Yannis Marinos, a prominent journalist and ideology-producer for the Centre-right (later President of the Committee for Structural Change at the Ministry of Economy and Finance). Still, their effective political role was muted at best.

One would have to go back to the term of office Timos Christodoulou, at the time that the Single Market was negotiated, to find a personality which actually assumed a central role in EU matters. Christodoulou was later to become Minister of National Economy and work decisively for the stabilisation of the Greek economy in the early Nineties, with EU assistance.

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²³⁰ It is worth noting that the Ecogreens are trying to respect the principles of open democracy among its members. According to Mr. Filippos Dragoumis (Interview, 5/12/2008), member of the Pan-Hellenic Council of the party, the procedure followed for the designation of the candidates for the Eurolist is the following: the members of the party that have fulfilled their economic obligations have the right to vote in a ballot organized in the offices of the party or to send their vote by mail and so choose their candidates.

²³¹ According to the specifications for this study, the Greek section of Ecogreens is not going to be included since this party won less than 2% of the popular vote in the last European elections and national elections. In fact the Ecogreens have won 0,67% at the last European elections and 1,05 at the last national elections (2007).

In the ranks of PASOK, the earlier firebrand / anti-European Socialist Party that ended in the Nineties being the most fervent pro-EU supporter (and instrumental in leading Greece to Euroland), the present leadership of the Party - G. Papandreou - used (in 2004) the Eurolist so as to promote the "renovation" of PASOK in more ways than one. The PASOK list incorporated a principle of equal presence of women, designating as "tête-de-liste" Maria Matsouka, a youthful unionist, totally unknown at the moment of her selection. Important MEPs of that same list, such as Stavros Lambrinidis or Panos Beglitis, were picked from his very close circle (Beglitis used to be MFA spokesman for Papandreou, when he had the portfolio of Foreign Affairs; he subsequently left his MEP seat to stand for election in the national elections of 2007 - successfully). Overall the PASOK Eurolist of 2004 had no glittering names.

Earlier PASOK MEP selections were used in order to launch political careers (e.g. of Christos Papoutsis, protégé of then-PASOK leader Andreas Papandreou, later Minister under C. Simitis and presently of the inner circle of G. Papandreou, or of Yannos Papantoniou, who was to become Minister of National Economy and in that capacity to lead the Greek economy to Euroland). Earlier on, the Eurolist of PASOK has been used as a platform for political maneuvering. Political figures of the now-defunct Centre Party such as G. Mavros got MEP seats at a time that PASOK was clearly left-leaning, so as to enlarge its electoral. Even earlier, the first Greek MEPs designated by PASOK for the EP (before the Euro-elections of 1982) included Costas Simitis, later to be high-profile Agriculture Minister, National Economy Minister and eventually Prime Minister, on whose term of office Greece joined the Euroland.

In the ranks of Synaspismos, the left-wing party considered Euro-Communist albeit with severe doubts about central components of present-day EU, (e.g. the very foundations of monetary Europe, the Maastricht criteria, the Stability Pact etc) the central personality of Alekos Alavanos had the opportunity of three consecutive terms of office as MEP (1989-2004). In 1981 he was also elected as MEP but as a candidate of the Greek Communist Party. His balancing act of leading SYN from a privileged margin of Greek political life (teetering near the 3% political-existence threshold and mainly serving as a counter-balance to the strict/anti-EU Greek Communist Party/KKE) to double-digit presence in mainstream politics has been decisively influenced by his Brussels/Strasbourg experience. Both in reaching internal equilibria within SYN and as an electoral vehicle SYRIZA (Confederation of the Radical Left) that aggregates quite different political components and in providing public opinion with a critical alternative to Center-Left and long-governing Socialist/Social-Democratic PASOK, Alavanos put to profit the "European experience" and the "European card". This both in positive/constructive and in negative/explosive ways, as political equilibria required.

Also from the ranks of Synaspismos Michalis Papagiannakis, who was a major figure in the staunchly pro-EU wing of the party, saw his influence largely expanding if not actually formed by his EP experience. Serving for three terms (from 1989 till 2004) Papagiannakis was active in importing to Greek political discourse whole blocks of social-policy thinking, of "green" development, of alternative agriculture, of integrated regional development. In this way Papagiannakis embodied in the political thinking and, more importantly, in the contribution of SYN to public discourse concepts and approaches that were magnified and multiplied by the media - ever eager to welcome "new thinking".

In these cases, MEPs designated at the left of the political spectrum by party leadership rather to provide them with a comfortable exile from the rough-and-tumble of the late Eighties and early Nineties (or even to keep them away from delicate party in-fighting) ended up contributing decisively to the later equilibrium of national politics.

The impact of European political parties

The Greek national parties under examination are members of five European political groups (out of the seven currently established EP political groups): the European People's Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED), the Party of European Socialists (PES), the European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE-NGL) and Independence/Democracy (I/D). It should be mentioned that the Greek section of Ecogreens is member of the European Green Party (EGP).

Nea Dimocratia is member of the European People's Party (EPP) and of the EPP-ED political group. The strategies of the EPP-ED party for 2008-2009 are the following: 1. Creating a Europe of values by updating, revitalising and modernizing of inherent values (freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities). 2. A firm and deeply-rooted transatlantic relationship based on mutual respect and understanding, 3. Developing and deepening the Neighbourhood Policy, continuing to pursue the Enlargement Policy, 4. Achieving an efficient and open single market and continuing to pursue the Lisbon Strategy objectives in order to promote a dynamic and innovative knowledge based European society, 5. The reform of the European Union budget and the defence of budgetary stability and monetary independence. The EPP family believes that the European Union must have a system of own resources in the near future, 6. Stepping up the fight against terrorism and protecting the public from organised crime, 7. Developing a coherent energy policy in the framework of measures to combat climate change and achieving sustainable development, 8. Ensuring food safety and security, 9. Developing a joint immigration policy. The EPP family believes that a common European approach to immigration must be one of its strategic priorities, 10. Measures to sustain the cohesion policy and uphold the values of the European social model.²³²

Nea Dimocratia has traditionally been using its "Europeaness" and the fact that its founder was instrumental for Greece joining the EU (then EEC), so as to claim a modernising role and to transfer European priorities to Greek political life. In practical terms, policy reforms were rarely influenced by the EU; it is mainly a "sense of belonging" that was cultivated, and a system of reference sought in "Europe".

PASOK is a member of the Party of European Socialist (PES). As it is shown above, the selection procedure of the candidates for the European elections has some elements of "participatory democracy".²³³ There is, possibly, an impact from the procedures followed by PES. It should be pointed out that the PES manifesto for the forthcoming European elections (1/12/2008)[6] was drawn up following a nine-month consultation involving over 300,000 visits to the consultation website, some 120 meetings across Europe, over 500 written contributions on-line, and more than 60 formal submissions from NGOs, trade unions, foundations and member parties.

The PES manifesto, "People first: A new direction for Europe", is committed to 1) relaunch the economy and prevent new financial crises, 2) create new social Europe - giving people a fairer deal, 3) transform Europe into the leading global force against climate change, 4) champion gender equality in Europe, 5) develop an effective European migration policy, 6) enhance

²³² "The ten priorities for the EPP-ED group a political strategy for 2008-2009", www.epp-ed.eu/Press/_pdoc08/Priorities2008-2009_en.pdf

²³³ PES Manifesto, "People first. A new direction for Europe", Madrid, 1/12/2008, See http://www.pes.org/downloads/PES_manifesto_2009-EN.pdf

Europe's role as a partner for peace, security and development. PES manifesto included over sixty concrete proposals including a European strategy for smart green growth to create 10 million new jobs by 2020, new financial market regulation covering all players including hedge funds and private equity, climate-changing emission reductions for industries such as transport and construction, a European Pact on Wages for decent minimum wages in all EU member states and stepping up the fight against the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation, ensure that transparency and accountability are cornerstones of all reforms of the European institutions and that EU legislation respects citizens' rights as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, making the EU Code of Conduct on weapons exports more restrictive and transparent and pushing for efforts to reach the United Nations Millennium Goals by 2015.

PASOK, having started as Eurosceptic, has used the European/Eurosocialist participation as a means to anchor its political action to a western-European direction. It has thus modernised its political discourse as well as its set of priorities from a radical, Third-World to a Social Democratic, Eurosocialist consensus that has made it possible for Greece to join the Euroland and to develop quasi-federalist leanings. Issues like environmental sensitivity or cohesion policies were largely influenced through PASOK participation to European mechanisms. The same goes for the selection procedures of its candidates and the notion of participatory democracy.

Both the Greek Communist Party as well as the Coalition of the Radical Left- Synaspismos are members of the European United Left-Nordic Green Left, a democratic socialist, eco-socialist and communist European political group. According to the Constituent Act of GUE/NLG (234), the Confederal Group of the European United Left is firmly committed to European integration, although in a different form from the existing model. The GUE/NLG political group promotes integration based on fully democratic institutions with a priority commitment to ensuring a new model of development aimed at tackling the most serious challenges. "It is Europe that operates on a basis of complete solidarity in order to bring ever closer the real parameters of the economies of each Member State". As far as the principles of the two Greek national parties, KKE (the "orthodox" Greek Communist Party) has kept its Euroscepticism, bordering to Eurohostility, intact throughout its participation to European political life. Synaspismos is not an anti-European party. Its objectives could be summarized to counter neoliberal reform of the pension and social security systems as well as opposition to the new anti-terrorist laws.

The fact that the European political groups embrace even parties with contradictable positions applies, as well, in the case of the European United Left-Nordic Green Left Political Group and of the two Greek left-wing parties. "Synaspismos" and the Communist Party, despite their substantial political differences regarding their stance towards the European Union, belong to the same political group. It should be also pointed that KEE maintains its clear antieuropean position.

LAOS is a member of Independence/Democracy Group in the European Parliament. incorporating EU-critics, eurosceptics and eurorealists. The main goals of the Group are to reject the Treaty establishing a constitution for Europe and to oppose all forms of centralisation. Some members within the group, notably the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), advocate the complete withdrawal of their country from the EU. LAOS (235) is a new political party (its

²³⁴ GUE/NGL Group's Constituent Declaration, Brussels, 14/7/1994, See <http://www.guengl.eu/showPage.jsp?ID=639>

²³⁵ According to the Policy Declaration of LAOS (See http://www.laos.gr/laos.asp?epilogi='pdf/PROGRAM_LAOS.

was established in 2000 and was elected in the European Parliament for the first time in 2004). Therefore, it is not possible to assess the impact of the ID political group on the selection procedure of LAOS' candidates.

Conclusions

Even though the interest for the European elections is still quite low, from January and hereafter the interest in the mass media (mainly in the newspapers) has been a bit stronger than before. The fact that there is no vivid interest in Greece on the European elections' campaign could be linked with the conception that the path to the future and the character of the European Union is determined by each country's national elections and that the European elections could be characterised as "a peculiarity of democracy" (Papadopoulos, 2009).

The overall level of "European content" in the functioning and in the campaigns of Greek-European Parliament parties remains low. The way in which MEPs candidates are selected, in addition to the single-district/blocked list system (236), does not favour either closeness of MEPs to their electorate or real, in-depth discussion of European issues. As a direct consequence (but also as a cause), MEPs do not campaign nor exercise their mandate in ways that would be considered constructive. The few exceptions are just that: exceptions.

As it is described and analysed in the previous section, the political discourse of Greek national parties approaches the political discourse of the European groups they belong to, however not to a great extent. This is also due to the fact that the core principles of the European political groups are vague, in order for various political parties to participate. In addition, national political parties would have more incentives to integrate into the European political groups if the role of these groups was more substantial and with a more direct effect on the direction of the EU policy agenda (See Introduction).

As far as the impact of the European political parties on the selection procedures is concerned, we come to the conclusion that it is neither great nor non-existent. Concerning Nea Dimokratia, policy reforms have been taken place more due to a "sense of belonging" cultivated, and a system of reference sought in "Europe" than to an impact of the participation to the EPP-ED political group. However, it should be taken into consideration that the EPP-ED group is the largest and looser political group of the European Parliament. As far as PA.SO.K. is concerned, the selection procedure of the candidates for the European elections contains elements of

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"1.2. For the European Union: We believe that the future of our country is linked with the European Union significantly and we support the integration of all countries of the European Union in a sustainable Union, we believe, however, that this can be achieved only in the framework of a Confederation which will recognize and protect the historical cultural and ethnic roots and the national characteristics of the European peoples. We favor a united Europe of nations, as it is envisaged and proposed by the INDEM.

We believe that the European Union can and must shape with consensus a Common Foreign Policy on issues of major interest, each European, however, as Greece, should maintain the right of veto on issues of vital national importance" (*Working translation*).

²³⁶ According to Hagemann and Hix (2008), a new electoral system for the European Parliament could be built on the best-practice used currently in the EU. The optimal solution suggested would be relatively small districts (for example, with 4 to 10 persons elected in each district) with an open ballot structure. Small districts with open ballots are already used in Estonia, Ireland, Luxembourg, Northern Ireland, and Malta. Belgium, Britain, Cyprus, France, Latvia, Poland and Slovenia already have small districts, but would need to introduce open ballot structures. Italy, Denmark, Finland and Lithuania already have open ballot systems but would need to be divided into smaller districts.

“participatory democracy” similar to the procedures followed by PES. It should be pointed out that participatory democracy was mainly introduced the last few years. As for KKE and Synaspismos, the procedures for their selection of candidates is more linked to domestic politics than to the European politics.

Since the end of the 20th century, the nominating procedures for candidates' selection have been one of the focuses of the study of political parties. It is assessed that the impact on the selection procedures is a more a question of “modernization” of the elite of a party rather than a question of Europeanization derived from the participation in the specific European political group. Therefore, the European parties constitute only one factor for the “modernization” of Greek party elites rather than a systematic procedure for the whole structure of national parties.

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SPAIN

The electoral system and the development of candidate lists

Elections in Spain are regulated in a very general way by the 1978 Constitution itself and in a detailed way by the Organic Law on the General Electoral System, known as the LOREG (Ley Orgánica de Régimen Electoral General), which was passed in June 1985. The LOREG, which has been partially amended on several occasions in the nearly 25 years it has been in effect, establishes the basic electoral regulations for three different types of elections: (i) local elections; (ii) general elections for the national parliament – a bicameral institution officially referred to as the *Cortes Generales*, composed of the Congress of Deputies and the Senate; and (iii) elections to the European Parliament (EP).²³⁷

With the exception of elections to the Senate – which are governed by a majority system – both the 1978 Constitution (cf. arts. 68 and 152) and the LOREG itself state that the Spanish electoral system has proportional representation and four territorial levels: local governments, regional parliaments, the Congress of Deputies and the European Parliament. However, the politically most important elections – to the Congress of Deputies – bring Spain more in line with a strong majority system than any European country, with the exception of the U.K. and its "first-past-the-post" single-member district system for national and local elections. In summary, the system for elections to the Congress of Deputies, which has shaped the Spanish party system for over thirty years, has the following features:

1. Its theoretically proportional design, as mentioned above, in practice creates **significant majority biases** as a result of two factors:
 - (a) Congress is a **small chamber**: with 350 deputies, it is among the smallest in Europe in relative terms.
 - (b) The number of constituencies or electoral districts (52) is high by contrast. The 350 seats are prorated among the 52 constituencies based on a dual criteria: an initial minimum of two seats are allocated to each district, while the rest are allocated in proportion to the respective population of each district. This dual criteria has led to constituencies that are, in general, **very small in magnitude**, with an average of 6.7 seats per constituency, one of the lowest proportions among European countries.
2. The adoption of the **D'Hondt electoral formula** to allocate seats has limited effects. In any case, although this formula belongs to the family of proportional formulas, the small magnitude of the districts favours the development of the aforementioned majority biases.
3. The third aspect of the electoral system involves **complete, closed and blocked multi-member lists**. Accepted during the transition as a way to protect new parties and inexpert voters, the system's lack of any kind of preferential vote has since been criticized for its alleged impact on the quality of the parliamentary elite and on the oligarchic nature of the parties. We will return later to this feature, which is essential to the issue of how candidate lists are developed.

The first of these features – the very small average magnitude of the electoral district – means that on the Spanish electoral map 52% of districts have five or fewer seats and contain only 21%

²³⁷ For regional elections (to the parliaments of the 17 Autonomous Communities) there are 17 specific electoral laws which, nevertheless, in all cases tend to share the same main formal features as the other elections held in Spain. As we will see, these features are: (a) proportional representation – though in some cases, such as Catalonia and the Basque Country, with a certain under-representation of the most populated districts; (b) the D'Hondt electoral formula; and (c) a multi-member, closed, blocked list system.

of voters; and, by contrast, only 13% of districts have more than ten seats, despite the fact that 43% of voters live there. It could even be said that elections to the Congress of Deputies are proportional only in the districts of Madrid and Barcelona, while all other districts, with minor nuances, operate essentially on a majority basis.

The effect of this significant majority bias in the ten elections held to date to the Congress of Deputies has been a gradual concentration of seats in nearly all constituencies with the two main parties – PSOE and PP. Although the legal threshold is quite low -- set at 3% of the valid vote in each constituency – in practice, this threshold has little effect since many parties that are well above it remain unrepresented. In fact, with an average district containing only 6.7 seats, in practice a very high “effective threshold” of 10.2% has been established for parties to participate in the allocation of seats – a figure surpassed only by Ireland among western European countries.

As a result, the Spanish system for elections to the Congress of Deputies belongs to the category of so-called “strong systems”, given its capacity to restrict voter behaviour and exert a reductive impact on party life. Its “mechanical effects” consist essentially of the over-representation of the two main parties – the most voted party in particular, especially if that party is conservative –, the systematic under-representation of small parties whose voter support is dispersed throughout the country, and a balanced proportion of regionalist and/or nationalist parties. The psychological effects, especially through the “useful vote” dynamic, reinforce and accentuate the mechanical effects by reducing the number of parties, rewarding those that receive the greatest percentage of the vote and penalizing the representation of small parties whose voters are spread across many districts. Another consequence of all this – and certainly not the least important one – is the likelihood that elections will result in “manufactured” or “prefabricated” majorities: this occurred three times for PSOE and once for PP, when both parties won absolute majorities of seats simply by being the most voted party. In short, this was originally a multi-party system, but over thirty years the effective number of parties that run in elections has dropped to only 2.5 and the number of parties represented in parliament to 2.2. In the general elections in 2008, PSOE and PP received 84% of votes and 92% of seats in Congress.²³⁸

Specific features of the European Parliament elections

Majority and conservative biases in the system of elections to the Congress of Deputies have a global impact on the Spanish party system and, although there is not as much mechanical disproportionality in other elections due to the larger magnitude of the districts – as is the case in local, regional and, especially, EP elections –, the fact is that the two main parties end up dominating electoral competition. The lead role of PSOE and PP largely carries over to other “secondary” elections²³⁹, and for this reason any consideration of the system used in Spain for EP elections must take into account the features of the system used for elections to Congress, as described above. In other words, although the EP elections do not share the very small electoral district magnitude that characterises elections to Congress, their true proportionality is very limited by the two-party bias in the Spanish electoral system as a whole.

²³⁸ Although, as was mentioned, this has not prevented the proportional and balanced inclusion in Congress of nationalist and/or regionalist parties in Catalonia, the Basque Country and other autonomous communities, which has facilitated their integration in national politics.

²³⁹ In this type of elections, abstention is even greater, governing parties lose support, opposition parties gain more support – sometimes a great deal more – and the most ideologically radical parties receive more votes.

In fact, at least formally, and contrary to the case in most European countries, the basic features of the Spanish system for elections to the EP differ considerably from those that regularly apply to elections to the Congress of Deputies. This is how the system is configured:

- Representation is **highly proportional** since the country itself is a **single constituency** in which 60 seats were allocated in the 1980s and 64 in the 1990s; this dropped to 54 in the 2004 elections and to 50 in 2009.²⁴⁰ Also, **there is no electoral threshold of any kind** to hinder access to the allocation of seats to parties that would otherwise be unable to reach such a threshold.
- The D'Hondt formula is in place for the distribution of seats among parties.
- There are complete, closed and blocked electoral lists.

In other words, this is a proportional system with a single national district, using a D'Hondt distribution formula whose small majority effects are even further diminished. However, although this configuration changed the bases for party competition that had been established for the Congress of Deputies, the progressive, overall concentration of the Spanish vote in favour of PSOE and PP, and the small percentages of the national vote that go to other parties, have ended up reproducing the same practically two-party system for elections to the European Parliament.

As a result, since parties other than the main ones face difficulties in developing candidate lists that have any chance of political success and since closed and blocked lists remain in place, the party elites continue to enjoy absolute control over candidate selection and over the order in which candidates appear on the ballot.²⁴¹ In fact, as we will see, party control over the selection of candidates for EP elections is even greater than in elections to Congress, due to a combination of four different factors: the single district, which strengthens centralized parties in comparison to the plurality seen in multi-district elections where greater negotiation with regional party bodies is necessary; the fact that European elections are considered "secondary"; the low profile of the immense majority of candidates; and the perceived distance of the activities carried out by the EP.

In short, all this makes up the institutional framework that party elites must keep in mind when selecting candidates to the EP – a framework that interacts with the rules and procedures followed in different ways by the main Spanish parties, and which we will examine here.

PSOE candidate selection for the European Parliament

The mechanisms for selecting elites in the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español, PSOE) are probably the most institutionalised from among the different

²⁴⁰ Such a significant reduction in seats, from 64 to 50, was the result of the successive EU enlargements and the implementation of the Treaty of Nice (in effect since 2003), when Spain successfully opted for a strategy to maximize its votes on the Council, while giving up seats in the EP. For the same reason, if the Treaty of Lisbon finally takes effect – reducing Spain's weight in the Council through the introduction of the double majority system – the number of Spanish members of the European Parliament will rise slightly to 54.

²⁴¹ Articles 44 to 46 of LOREG regulate the system for preparing multi-member lists according to this closed system, which must then be accepted or rejected en bloc – with no opportunity for voters to rule out specific names or change their order. Parties have total freedom to prepare candidate lists, except for the stipulation in article 44bis (an amendment introduced in 2007) regarding the "balance between women and men, so that on the list as a whole, candidates of each gender make up at least forty percent." And also, "the forty percent minimum shall apply to each group of five positions."

political groups in Spain. The party is made up of formal structures that have functions including the task of elaborating the electoral lists for the European Parliament (EP) (PSOE, 2005, 2008). The long process of crystallising these structures has permitted the establishment and arrangement of formal selection processes for candidates in differing elections. This formalisation has become especially evident in the case of the EP, circumscription for which occurs at national level. The process is carried out therefore in the more centralised federal body of the party.

List-making begins around two months before the application period, when the Secretary for Party Organization – or the new role of General Vice-secretary, reintroduced in 2008 – applies to the Federal Executive Commission (FEC) for the writing and structuring of the lists for the EP from the Federal Lists Commission. After considering the proposals from the various territorial federations, the Lists Commission returns their proposal to the FEC to be approved and, when necessary, passed on to the Federal Committee formally in charge of its ratification.

There is a margin for informal selection or direct appointment of candidates, although it is relatively narrow. For EP elections, the right to push for personally close candidates is denied even for the General Secretary or the head of the electoral list (appointed previous to the beginning of the process of forming the rest of the candidate list). Support from the party elites or the regional leaders can facilitate one's nomination in the list, but is not a guarantee. Given the complexity and the sturdiness of the system for choosing candidates, bringing together agreements between the different actors involved in making of this choice (the Secretary for Organization* or the General Vice-secretary, the FEC, the Federal Committee for Electoral Lists and territorial federations) is necessary for a candidate to be successful in the process. This agreement must also be in keeping with factors related to territorial representation, positive evaluation of previous roles and sexual equality rulings.

As with the majority of Spanish political parties, the fundamental factor in the selection of PSOE candidates for the EP is territory. Initially, given that the PSOE looks for some twenty five seats, each of the seventeen autonomous communities can aim to position a candidate in the starting blocks*, though smaller regions could be left out while others get several Members of the EP (MEPs), such as Andalusia or Madrid. The number of votes and supporters in the different autonomous communities is enormously important in deciding the number and the order of those included in this process. This is because the PSOE has the custom of filling the first positions on the electoral list with candidates from the regions with the most supporters, or where the PSOE tends to receive more votes. The diverse territorial federations of the PSOE are therefore the basic organising units in the initial process of proposing candidates. Given that this territorial criterion has the most weight, the autonomous barons are those who have greatest power in the process of proposing new candidates for the EP. These leaders propose the candidates that they regard fit.

As well as the territorial factor, if a candidate already forms part of the EP and their term has been positively assessed by the party, this fact influences their continuation in the list. When coming up to the end of their period, each Spanish Socialist MEP passes a letter to the spokesperson for the party in the EP, in which they self-evaluate their labour during the mandate, announce their interest in continuing their position and defend the merits of this prolongation. In considering this continuation, the party analyses the letter and weighs up the loyalty shown, the initiative, and if the author continues enjoying territorial support. The trust of the party elite is therefore essential not only for being included in the list, but also for having one's position renewed. The MEP's work capabilities and leadership abilities are important in so

far as they are necessary qualities for renewing the support from the party elites. However, the ability to communicate in foreign languages, the development of networks in Brussels or the contact with citizens and organizations are factors that are not as noted in positive assessments. The influence of the Party of European Socialists in this process is virtually zero.

The number of MEPs from the PSOE that have positions renewed tends to be in the region of a little less than half of the total presented in each election. Normally, due to there being few voluntary withdrawals, substitutions in the list are caused by the emergence of candidates with greater (normally territorial) support that are able to convince the directors of the party of the convenience of this action. In certain cases the pressure of a new proposal (if it is suitably accompanied by political support) can cause the substitution of a veteran representative, even if there has been no negative assessment of their parliamentary term.

The third element to be considered in the selection of candidates for the PSOE is made up of the new legal obligations in matters of sexual equality. Even though Spanish law requires at least 40% of those presented by political parties to be women, the PSOE affirms that this should be fixed at 50% and the lists should be drawn up in an alternating fashion.

Other sources of pressure and disagreement in the process of constructing lists are the confrontations between the party's internal ideological currents. The collision between different sensibilities is one of the elements that has been most important for the PSOE in the selection of their elites. However, the current position of the party in power in the Spanish Government and the group found around the leader Rodriguez Zapatero have helped avoid these confrontations in the most recent selection processes. Debate about the need to carry out selection processes that are more democratic, participative and transparent has not been produced in recent years due to the role of this very group. Procedures in the style of primaries are generally not trusted (but are formally in the Statutes, although they are limited to the selection of those that head the lists), since recent experiences have occasioned disagreements and confrontations, weakening the public image and the internal unity of the party.

Another element to be considered in the selection processes for electoral candidates from the PSOE is the recent interest in the inclusion of discriminated collective groups, such as homosexuals and immigrants, in the various electoral lists. These changes also open new routes towards the introduction of different electoral lists for the PSOE. Despite this, sexual equality and the inclusion of certain social groups are considered as elements complementary to the most important factor for choosing candidates for the EP: territory.

PP candidate selection for the European Parliament

In the People's Party (Partido Popular, PP), as with all of the political groups that compete in the elections for the EP, the fact that the elections are of one single circumscription foments the elaboration of electoral lists in the central directing body. However, unlike other parties, the PP does not regulate the process of creating lists for the EP. Formally, the National Electoral Committee is the institution responsible for elaborating and approving these lists (article 47 of the Statute from the XVI Congress), although electoral committees at other levels also have the power to "approve or modify the candidate proposals that arise" (Article 46 of the Statute). An ample margin for people to illegitimately choose candidates without formal authorisation and arrange lists for the EP in informal processes is left by the fact that in the statutes there is no indication of where the proposals for candidates should come from.

The process of elaborating the electoral lists for the PP begins with a statement declaring the opening of the period of applications, although designation of the head of the list tends to begin slightly earlier. In doing so, the party tries to avoid internal conflicts coming from the assignation and distribution of candidates in the list. There are various sources for possible candidates. On the one hand, it is common that those interested present themselves to different members of the party elite months before the application period is announced to make up the lists. These self-proposals are generally presented to the regional presidents, the national President, the General Secretary of the party or the President of the Electoral Committee. This is because these figures make up the decisive nucleus for making candidate lists. Another source of candidates is made up of the higher members of the administration (whether or not they currently exercise a role) that have previous experience (ex-representatives, diplomats who are unsatisfied in their location, and so on). Finally, the electoral lists are also fed from the European People's Party Group in the EP.

Despite the various proposals that can be made, it is the national President of the party who decides the Head and the members of the list for the EP elections, as well as their order. In agreement with the General Secretary and the President of the National Electoral Committee (NEC), the National President carries out a first proposal to be sent to the NEC for ratification. Nevertheless, this is not carried out with absolute discretion, but rather under the conditioning of other factors, which are the following: the choice of the head of the list, the Law for Equality, territorial representation, the specialization of the candidate to go onto the list, and the evaluation of the candidate's term (if they already had a seat).

Among those that can voice their opinion regarding the candidates in the list there is the Parliamentary Spokesman for the PP, who tends to choose one or two trusted candidates to accompany them in the list, which limits to a degree the discretion of the National President; the spokesperson and the head of the list also write the report appraising the terms of the various MPs, which serves as the National President's base for evaluating their work.

The second (and probably most important) factor that conditions the lists comes from the Law for Equality of the Spanish government, according to which all electoral lists must have no more than 60% (and no less than 40%) of candidates of the same sex. This factor, affecting the EP elections for the first time, means that the leaders of the PP have to offer a list of at least twenty women. This implies that for the current representatives in the EP the probability of being included again in the list are reduced. This can also generate more intense competition between self-proposed candidates and those suggested by the regional presidents of the party.

In the PP there is an unwritten law that guarantees that, given the elevated number of MPs that tend to be chosen for the PP lists, every Autonomous Community can 'position' one proposed candidate from the regional party in the list for the EP. With the PP opting for some twenty five seats, and there being nineteen autonomous communities in Spain, territorial pressures are converted into a highly important criteria when it comes to selecting the elites for the EP. Even when putting the list of candidates in an order, the criteria are territorial, meaning that the candidates from the most important communities for the PP occupy the first positions. The regional Presidents of the party generally give their proposals to the national President and the General Secretary in an informal manner, because there are no rules to regulate this process.

The fourth relevant criterion for the elaboration of the list is the candidate's area of specialization. The EP is a representative institution that is highly specialized and professional and requires concrete knowledge about very concrete areas of the politics that are carried out in the European Union. Due to this, the candidate must have knowledge of different languages

(even if only to a minimum level) and a relevant sector such as agriculture, budgets, fishing, culture, as well as general knowledge of European topics.

The fifth criterion is the principal variable that explains the continuity or renovation of candidates for the EP and regards the workings of the parliamentary group in Brussels. There tends to be few changes to the European party electoral lists, primarily due to three circumstances: firstly, it is not common for a Member of the EP to relinquish their re-election, unless forced by personal circumstances. Generally speaking, a MEP tends to lose contact with their territory and consequently have little influence among the people there. In this situation, the incentives for them returning to the national, regional or local political arena or for the party to reintroduce them in national, regional or local lists are reduced. Secondly, it is likely that, due to inertia, a MEP continues in the following term rather than being replaced. This inertia is partly determined by the specialization and the experience of the representative during their term, crucial for their success in the EP. Finally, the experience of the representative in the EP, their networks constructed in Brussels, and the distinction and the trust that they have earned during their term are highly valued by the PP. Despite this, one of the fundamental criteria for continued trust in a politician is their loyalty to the party. Maintaining connections with the party's propositions in Spain is one of the fundamental requirements for the repetition of a MEP's candidacy, and their appraisal by the party depends on their language ability, attendance at the plenary and commission sessions, the networks in which they operate, leadership capabilities, initiative in the different commissions and dedication to parliamentary tasks. Nevertheless, it is the trust of the head of the list that is most highly valued.

It does not appear to be that pressure derived from rivalries between different internal loyalties in the party affect the process of presenting applications for candidacies. Party discipline in the search for internal unity, as well as the dominant role of the group of leaders, make it difficult for tensions from confrontations between different currents to come to the surface. Internally democratizing measures taken in the process of selecting candidates or for adding transparency are seen with wariness for this very reason. Seen this way, the independents (people without party affiliations) have little weight in the elaboration of lists or in the list itself.

The candidates do not sign any agreement to ensure ethical behaviour. Neither do they have to previously make any declaration of their economic status. However, once in the list, the candidates sign an internal document for the party, guaranteeing that they will enter into the European People's Party parliamentary group. This measure is designed to avoid defection from the party and does not imply that there is any influence from the EPP in the construction of candidatures.

IU candidate selection for the European Parliament

In the choice of the head of the list, as with choosing all candidates, for the party United Left (Izquierda Unida, IU) the principal protagonist is the Executive Federal Presidency (EFP), which is the only body able to create the electoral list for the EP . Given that IU is put forward in coalition with the Catalan group Iniciativa per Catalunya-Verds, and that this coalition does not aim to have much more than two representatives, the choice for the head of the list is fundamental.

The EFP evaluates the possible candidates and gives their proposal for the head of the list to the Federal Political Counsel. If they are in agreement, the candidate is announced. However, if at least 25% of the members of the Federal Political Counsel do not approve the proposal from the

EFP, primary elections to choose the leader are called and organised by the EFP. Regarding the entire list, if at least 10% of the members of the Federal Political Counsel consider other proposals, an alternative list is written with at least 50% of the candidates changed.

In any situation, the initiative is always that of the EFP, the only body able to propose list members and the head of the list. This is a new procedure, because the existence of the EFP only came about in the last Federal Assembly (IU, 2008), with this role previously exercised by the Executive Federal Commission. Anyway, due to the lack of a specific committee or section for the making of IU electoral lists, it is an unusual procedure.

The process begins six months before the elections, when the EFP announces their proposal for the head of the list. At this time, a period for receiving alternative proposals from the territorial federations is announced.

In the evaluation of different candidates, the three maxims that guide the EFP are the plural nature of internal considerations, territorial factors and sexual equality. The list-making process for elections for the EP is rather tranquil, even though there is a high number of applications and pressures from different ideological and territorial currents.

As with the PSOE and the PP, the process includes the evaluation of the labour of already-serving MEPs for IU (there is only one at the moment), above all bearing in mind aspects that have to do with the “grade of synchrony” of the MEPs regarding the party stance. If the territorial representatives from IU put together a negative evaluation of the representative in the EP, then the need to propose a new name is put forward. The territorial federations are responsible for putting forward new candidates. These candidate changes tend to be due to generational renewals or changes in the weight behind different currents in the territorial sections of the party. Trade unions and external associations that are close to IU can also play a role in the proposal of candidates from their organizations who are normally affiliates of IU.

The IU candidates for the EP are usually affiliates of the political party. If this is not the case, the candidate must be supported by open consensus. In any given case it is the EFP that is in charge of the communication and formation of these proposals.

Sub-national parties and European Parliament elections

Compared to other kinds of elections, the use of a single national district makes it very difficult for many subnational parties to obtain parliamentary representation in the European Parliament (EP) if they participate in the elections on an individual basis. This is why, as we will discuss below, these parties establish coalitions at the national level to improve their prospects of electoral representation. In this section, we will look at the procedures that these parties follow to appoint their candidates, with special attention to the criteria they use to elect national coalition partners and to negotiate the order in which their respective candidates appear on the lists. First of all, we will look at the internal processes that parties follow to select candidates; then, we will study the criteria they use to establish national coalitions that maximize their chances of representation in the EP. Finally, we will briefly review the patterns these same parties have followed in terms of their participation in European political groups.

However, before reviewing their criteria, we must briefly introduce these Spanish political parties. Spain is likely the EU country with the greatest number of subnational parties, but their

electoral and political importance varies greatly. Accordingly, three categories of parties can be distinguished:

- 1) Major parties. These include the CiU and ERC coalitions in Catalonia; PNV, EA and HB/EH in the Basque Country; BNG in Galicia; CC in the Canary Islands; and CHA in Aragon. Most of these parties are or have been part of regional governments and all of them are or have been represented in the Spanish Cortes (Parliament). These are the eight parties or coalitions that, either independently or as part of a coalition, have received the lion's share of representation among subnational parties in the EP. In this section we will deal almost exclusively with them.
- 2) Medium-size parties. These are parties that are not, nor have ever been represented in the national Parliament, but that are represented in their respective regional Parliaments, some of them having participated in coalition governments at this level. They include PA in Andalusia, PAR in Aragon, UV and the BLOC in Valencia, UM and PSM in the Balearic Islands and CDN in Navarre. In Galicia, several of these parties, CG, PG-N and PNG, along with other smaller parties, came together in the early nineties to form a single group: the BNG (see the first category, above). When they have been part of European electoral coalitions, these parties have usually been given a role that is secondary to the major parties. They have occasionally been represented in the European Parliament, but always through term-sharing agreements established within the coalitions themselves. In general, we will not be referring to them, but as Table X shows, they often form part of national coalitions with bigger parties.
- 3) Very small parties such as PANCAL, PAS and EU (not an exhaustive list) that play a minor role even in regional politics. We will not be dealing with these. Although they occasionally also do form part of national coalitions, none of them has been represented in the EP.

The candidate selection process within the parties

The fact that most subnational parties compete and take part in broader national coalitions suggests that, in terms of their chances of ultimately having a candidate elected, the candidate selection process within the parties themselves is less important than in the case of national parties, and less relevant than the process of negotiations that goes on at the national level among the parties from different autonomous regions –an issue that we will deal with later-. However, in groups such as CiU and PNV, which have often run alone (or with very small partners), or who are guaranteed the election of at least one parliamentary representative in their coalitions, this internal process may in fact be more significant. For this reason, in this section we will focus mainly on these two parties, while making reference to other formations such as ERC.

Both formally and informally, the evidence we have examined shows that the process of selecting candidates for the EP is essentially in the hands of the parties' central decision-making bodies, with little participation from other spheres or from mid-level or grassroots organizations. The statutes of both PNV and CDC make their respective National Councils (which PNV calls the National Assembly) ultimately responsible for approving candidatures to the EP. In both cases, these Councils act as extended executive bodies for the parties and they are also responsible for appointing candidates to public office at the regional level (i.e. in the Basque Country and Catalonia) and at the national level (Las Cortes). However, despite the formal powers held by the Councils, everything seems to indicate that the final decisions are made in

very small circles. The PNV statutes themselves state that the National Assembly is responsible for the approval of candidates, based on proposals by the party's central executive body, the Euskadi Buru Batzar (EBB). In the case of CDC, the information provided by the party executive indicates that the final decision (especially regarding who heads a list) corresponds to the Secretary General and the main leader of the political formation, who consults with close advisors before making a decision. Informal mechanisms tend to ensure that there is complete consensus on the decision when it is presented to the Consell Nacional (of both CDC and CiU), which is ultimately the body that approves the final candidatures in this well-established coalition.

The ERC's statutes, meanwhile, formally provide for a consultation process with regional and local organizations for all proposed candidatures above the municipal level, including the European Parliament, although they do not explicitly refer to this. Nevertheless, in this case too, the information provided by an expert on the party and former member of its National Executive indicates that proposals are approved by the National Council at the proposal of the National Executive. Decisions on the proposal are made by the ERC Permanent Committee, the central decision-making body. In any case, it seems that for ERC and for most of these parties, the fact that candidate selection involves a dual process (internal selection on one hand and subsequent external negotiation on the other) tends to strengthen executive control over the internal selection process, with the justification that this proposal must be negotiated later with the other partners in the national coalition.

In many cases, certainly, specific party candidates may run for election on two or more occasions. As a result, the experience that these candidates acquire in the EP may be a significant factor in the proposals that their party executives make. Here are a few clear examples of this: Josu Ortuondo has been the PNV candidate since the 1999 European elections and he looks likely to run again in 2008 ; Camilo Nogueira, the BNG representative elected to the legislature in 1999-2004, ran again in the following elections, and Carlos Garaikoetxea of EA, and Heribert Barrera of ERC ran in two elections in a row (1987 and 1989). The rank of the candidates or their influence within the party organization has varied considerably. In some cases, they are prominent leaders of their respective parties, for example Carlos Garaikoetxea of EA, who was elected to Parliament when he was party leader. In general, however, they are mid-level leaders in their own parties.

Candidatures and coalition strategies of sub-national parties in European Parliament elections

Table X shows the experience of the candidates (either independent or part of national coalitions) of the main subnational parties in European Parliament elections. As can be seen, the trends are complex, with some coalitions remaining stable and others forming, then splitting up from one election to another. Along the same lines, if we consider each party individually, certain formations such as ERC and EA have maintained a relatively consistent coalition strategy all along, while others, such as PNV and BNG, have changed their national coalition strategy several times.

Despite this varied and complex panorama, the information in the Table indicates certain general trends over time. In the first three elections to the EP (1987-1994) the main subnational formations (CiU, PNV and EA at the time) ran either separately or in conjunction with smaller parties. By contrast, in the most recent elections, in 2004, a new and larger configuration, Galeusca, brought together the main nationalist parties of the three "historic nationalities" and

led to the best results to date for a coalition of this kind, while two smaller coalitions remained unchanged: Europa de los Pueblos, composed of ERC-EA, and Coalición Europea, composed of CC and a long list of medium-size parties more easily classified as regionalist than nationalist.

As was mentioned above, between 1987 and 1994 three general groupings developed: first, CiU; second, a grouping around PNV (Coalición Europeísta in 1987 and Coalición Nacionalista in 1989-1994); and third, a grouping around the agreement between EA and ERC: Europa de los pueblos. The second grouping, Coalición Nacionalista, won a higher percentage of the vote as CC consolidated itself as a political force in the Canary Islands. However, in 1999 there was a major realignment when Coalición Nacionalista broke into two groups. While one of these groups, headed by PNV, joined Europa de los Pueblos along with EA (its partner in the elections and in government at the time), the other, headed by CC, formed a new coalition: Coalición Europea. This change in turn reflected a realignment both in Basque politics and Spanish politics that resulted in the formation of a sovereignist front based on an election coalition between PNV and EA, and on the growing conflict between PNV and PP, both in the context of Spanish national politics and in the international bodies to which both parties belonged (Christian Democrat International and EPP). As we will see later, this realignment also brought about a change in PNV's overall strategy for its participation in the EP. In 2004, there was another realignment with the formation of Galeusca which, as was mentioned, includes the three main nationalist formations in Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia. The formation of this new coalition responded in part to growing collaboration between the three nationalist parties (which began with the Barcelona Declaration in 1998) and also to the goal of maximizing their chances of representation, given the decreasing number of seats allocated to Spain in the EP. Clearly, coalition agreements respond at least in part to ideological strategic affinities among the parties, but these affinities depend more on the national or sometimes regional context than on the European context.

Once partners have been chosen, what criteria do parties follow to determine the order in which their candidates will appear in the lists and, in general, how representation in the EP will be shared? To answer this question, we have examined in greater detail the negotiating criteria used by the two coalitions that obtained the largest percent of the vote in the last elections (2004), Europa de los Pueblos and Galeusca, although we will also make reference to other formations and coalitions.

Following the same criteria as on previous occasions, the Europa de los Pueblos coalition agreement in 2004 ordered the lists according to the percentage of the vote obtained by each party in the most recent general elections (Esquerra Nacional, 2004: 5). Also, since 1989 –as ERC and EA reached a more balanced position- the coalition has followed a system of shared terms. According to an expert in the party, terms are shared according to the percentage of votes that each region contributes to the coalition. However, in 1999, when PNV joined the coalition, its candidate was put at the top of the list and the term was not shared. By contrast, since 1989, ERC and EA have consistently shared elected terms. Other coalitions, such as Coalición Nacionalista in 1989 and 1994, and Coalición Europea in 1999 (see Table X) have also followed this system for some or all of the seats they obtain, sometimes even sharing a seat among three formations. In all cases, the term is shared according to the relative weight of each party. Through these agreements, the European Parliament elections offer an important opportunity for political representation and visibility –albeit brief- to relatively small parties that are not represented even at the national level. In this regard, for small parties, shared terms are a major incentive to participate in national coalitions with larger parties.

According to information provided by a CiU leader, the Galeusca agreement of 2004 followed the criteria of the relative weight of each party in its respective region, resulting in the following order: CDC (1), PNV (2), BNG (3), UDC (4). This was a major change for the smallest partner in the Catalan coalition, UDC, which in previous elections had won representation in every legislature by always being second on the list (see Table X). In a formation like CiU, therefore, participation in a national coalition has very different implications for each of the members. Furthermore, since Galeusca has no agreements on shared terms, when the formation lost its third seat to PP in 2004, BNG lost the representative it had had in the previous legislature. For third parties such as BNG and UDC, therefore, the cost of participation in Galeusca is greater than it is in coalition agreements such as Europa de los Pueblos and Coalición Europea.

Participation by representatives of regional parties in Parliament political groups and in European parties

Similar to what we have seen above, the rules for participation in EP political groups vary greatly according to the party or the national coalition in question. In some coalitions, the elected representatives consistently join the same group after an election, while in others each member of the coalition chooses a different political group. In extreme cases, parties that share a term in the EP may even choose to join other groups when their turn comes. Some parties, including CDC, EA, ERC and UDC, are quite consistent and join the same political group after each election, while others are more erratic –PNV is the most striking case–, joining a different group in each legislature.

In this regard, the most consistent example is ERC/EA in the framework of Europa de los Pueblos. Since the eighties, the two parties have formed part of the European Free Alliance (EFA), which brings together progressive nationalist parties, and which, since 1999, has joined the Greens to become a single political group, Greens/EFA, in the European Parliament. Even when PNV formed an election coalition with Europa de los Pueblos in the 1999 elections, it also ended up joining Greens/EFA. It therefore seems that in the case of EA and ERC, both the European political group (and party) do indeed have a certain influence on how these parties define their coalition strategies for the European elections. Also, for each election, Europa de los Pueblos usually sets out shared planks for a platform determined, in part, by input from EFA members. Other parties such as CDC and UDC have also been quite consistent in terms of the groups they join. In these cases, however, their choices have been determined more by their ideological perspective and history (closer to Christian Democracy in the case of UDC, more liberal in the case of CDC) than by their stance on issues of self-government. However, in other cases, such as those of PNV and CC, the groups seem to have very little influence over the election strategies that the parties adopt, and these strategies appear to be adopted mainly on the basis of political circumstance and opportunity.

Conclusions: institutionalisation (and oligarchic tendencies) without Europeanization

The regulation of elections to the Spanish Congress (the most politically important elections in Spain, characterised by numerous districts or reduced or medium magnitude, prorrato desviado* and the use of the D'Hondt formula) have configured a general election system with elevated disproportionality and clearly majoritarian slants. Despite the fact that EP elections benefit from a proportional system made up of one single national circumscription without legal barriers that modify a priori the conditions of the pre-established and practically-bipartisan

competition for the Congress, it is certain that in reality the expectations of small parties for winning seats have not improved, and votes have continued to be concentrated in the two principal national parties. The single circumscription has, in fact, forced all of the nationalist and regionalist parties to rehearse different strategies through coalitions, to maximise the chances for representation.

The majoritarian, and therefore bipartisan, slant of the system, combined with the preservation of closed and blocked lists, as well as other factors (public financing of parties or the regulation of parliamentary activity, for example) have brought about extremely cohesive and hierarchical parties (Holliday, 2002), in which the party elites enjoy almost complete control of the opaque process of selecting candidates and ordering their names on the voting slips. In these disciplined internal conditions, the criteria for inclusion in and ordering of the lists are normally controlled by only a few people from the party apparatus and are according to territorial (giving priority to the regions that are important for the party) and gender factors (due to the legal demand for equality). Even if it is the Secretary for Party Organisation or the General Secretary who controls the process, they do not monopolise it, due to the influence from the significant territorial divisions. This is in line with the increasing federalisation of the Spanish political system and the party systems (Ramiro & Morales, 2007).

The two factors mentioned here (the need to accommodate territorial and gender elements) are undoubtedly added to the candidate's loyalty to the party and their ability to connect with the party elites. It is true that the party's assessment of the candidate also depends on their foreign language ability, productivity in EP plenary and commission sessions, networks of relations, leadership capabilities and initiative, and general dedication to parliamentary tasks. However, enjoying continued political support (especially territorial) is much more relevant. Among this constellation of factors the weight of the strictly European variable is zero in the creation of candidate lists, in reference to the specialisation of the representative in EU matters as well as their exclusive political links with their party's delegation or with the EP Group. In Spain, European politics are dominated by consensus in PSOE as well as in PP. Due to this the process for postulation of representatives for the EP is not even animated by possible debate over the alternative strategies that the Government should defend in Brussels (which does occur in other countries) (Closa & Heywood 2004: 74). In the end, as consequence of the single district tending to reinforce the centralisation of decisions, the lists for the EP elections are prepared with even less plurality in comparison with the candidature formation processes for national or regional elections (Ramiro & Morales, 2007).

Even though there is certain debate about the convenience of making the system more transparent, it is certain that the introduction of more democratic and participative selection processes for the base members of the parties is viewed with caution, since this would provoke internal confrontations, visible to the electorate. Regarding the electoral system as a whole, despite proposals to reduce the intense majoritarian slant and diversify the closed and blocked character of pluralist lists (State Counsel, 2009) it is certain that the opinion among the party elites is almost unanimously positive, considering that it works reasonably well due to its effectiveness at integrating at the same time as affording governmental stability. After more than thirty years of existence, although the system has undeniably negative dimensions (voting inequality and oligarchic processes in the creation of party lists) it is certain that almost all of the political leaders and most of the analysts increasingly appear to house doubts about the possibility of reaching agreements on different electoral rules. The current electoral law has therefore not become the most durable and accepted in the history of Spanish democracy in vain.

FRANCE

Introduction

In France, the European elections are afflicted by a high abstention rate (52.7% turnout in 1994, 46.8% in 1999 and 42.86% in 2004) and campaigns generally concentrate on national issues²⁴². This difficulty in Europeanising French political life, which is also demonstrated by the infrequency with which national parliamentarians²⁴³ and party campaigners²⁴⁴ take on European concerns, was cited as evidence to justify the reform of the voting system for the European elections, which was undertaken in 2003. However, the **regionalisation introduced by this reform**, which aimed to bring MEPs closer to their electorate, does not, alone, explain the nomination procedures adopted by French parties. Just over four months before the second electoral term governed by this new voting system begins, it seems timely to take stock of this reform and to examine the formal and informal processes by which the lists for the elections on 7 June 2009 will be produced.

After looking at the main implications of this reform, we will set about studying the statutory requirements governing the drawing-up of lists, along with the more informal criteria adopted by each of the political organisations (according to the threshold used in this study, these are organisations that have obtained over 2% of votes in France), with particular emphasis on those practices that appear to be common to all parties. The information presented here is based both on press articles and the organisations' internal documents (statutes, conference resolutions, and, occasionally, political speeches), on both political speeches or accounts given by official party figures and on interviews with party leaders or permanent officials overseeing the process. It should, however, be noted that, the information presented with regard to the forthcoming elections is based on party negotiations that have barely begun, in terms of both the internal selection process and discussions with potential partners. Some newly-founded minority parties on the left must also hold their founding conference and adopt their new statutes in the coming months, notably the NPA²⁴⁵.

General information about the selection of candidates

The law of 11 April 2003 on the election of regional councillors and Members of the European Parliament and on public funding for political parties incorporated existing provisions (such as gender parity on voting lists, obligatory since the law of 6 June 2000), but primarily introduced new ones, such as the conversion of one national constituency into eight interregional constituencies. This reform has had a varying impact on parties' selection procedures.

²⁴² I would like to thank Carole Bachelot, Olivier Costa and Eric Kerrouche for their help, along with the interviewees.

²⁴³ O. Rozenberg, 'Les plaisirs de présider une commission. L'examen des affaires européennes à l'Assemblée nationale et à la Chambre des Communes depuis Maastricht', Revue française de science politique, due to be published in 2009.

²⁴⁴ A. Roger, 'L'impossible appropriation de l'Union européenne par les militants des partis politiques nationaux', in O. Costa, P. Magnette (ed.), *Une Europe des élites? Réflexions sur la fracture démocratique de l'Union européenne*, Editions de l'Université Libre de Bruxelles, 2007, pp. 37-54.

²⁴⁵ A merger of the former LCR and a number of associated anticapitalist movements (whose conference is due to be held on 6 February) and the Parti de gauche (PG - Left Party), formed following a split within the former PS (conference on 1 February).

Electoral system reform of 2003

The system of election from a single national constituency, in use in France since 1979, was hastily deemed to be one of the main factors in voters' lack of interest in the European elections and the difficulty they had in identifying MEPs²⁴⁶. A single constituency favoured the **selection of candidates 'from above'**, i.e. decisions taken at national level without consulting the intermediate ranks of the party – selections made on the basis of political, or even personal, closeness to national leaders and for reasons of internal balance, to the detriment of other considerations (local ties, experience in European affairs etc.). In addition to the approach taken to selecting candidates, the size of the constituency and the closed nature of the lists encouraged candidates to withdraw from the running in favour of competition between political allies. The proportional voting system (with a 5% threshold and an allocation of the remaining seats according to the highest average) also resulted in a greater number of lists. The European elections, in which the voting behaviour in the mid-term elections was reproduced on a larger scale, ultimately favoured the protest vote, which saw elected Members spread across the various groups of the European Parliament, thereby reducing French parliamentarians' influence within the institution²⁴⁷.

In order to close this gap between parliamentarians and voters, the French legislator chose to reduce the size of electoral constituencies rather than open up the lists. The official aim of the regionalisation of voting was to **attach renewed importance to candidates' local ties, as regards both their selection and the performance of their duties**. The law created seven regional constituencies in Metropolitan France and one overseas on the basis of the existing grouping of regions, with the seats allocated in line with population. The voting system remains one of full proportional representation, with a threshold of 5% for the allocation of a seat and the distribution of the rest on the basis of the highest average. Parity is compulsory, meaning that the list must alternate between candidates of each sex, with no restriction as regards the head of the list. In a less marked way, the reform also aimed to **favour the larger political parties** over smaller and/or protest groupings. It did this in two ways: firstly, by automatically restricting the number of seats that can be won by smaller groupings²⁴⁸ and, secondly, by confining the protest quota within a campaign to a single constituency and looking at the results in a national context. The table below shows the distribution by interregional constituency of the 78 seats allocated to France. Following the June 2009 elections, France will have a total of 72 seats in the European Parliament under the Nice Treaty. This number could rise to 74 in 2010 if the Lisbon Treaty comes into force²⁴⁹.

²⁴⁶ O. Costa, E. Kerrouche, J. Pelerin, 'Les députés européens en quête de "proximité", retour sur la réforme française du mode de scrutin aux élections européennes', in O. Costa, P. Magnette (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 115-138.

²⁴⁷ From 1999 to 2004, more than one French parliamentarian in two belonged to one of the four smallest groups or was non-attached. See T Chopin, 'The French Influence in the European Parliament: results and perspectives. What challenges are on the horizon with the European Elections - 2009?', Robert Schuman Foundation, European Issues No 119-120, December 2008.

²⁴⁸ Owing to the uneven distribution of their voters across the country and the application of a proportionality formula to the smallest parties (bearing in mind that the remaining seats are allocated according to the highest average).

²⁴⁹ The arrangements in this case have not yet been decided, but there would be no need for a new election, or even a by-election. See H. Haenel, *Rapport d'information fait au nom de la commission des Affaires européennes sur les conséquences institutionnelles de la non-entrée en vigueur du traité de Lisbonne*, Senate No 168, 14 January 2009.

Interregional constituencies	Grouping of regions	Seats 2004	Seats 2009 ²⁵⁰
Ile-de-France	Ile-de-France	14	13
South-East	Corse, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Rhône-Alpes	13	13
North-West	Basse-Normandie, Haute-Normandie, Nord Pas de Calais, Picardie	12	10
South-West	Aquitaine, Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrénées	10	10
West	Bretagne, Pays de la Loire, Poitou-Charente	10	9
East	Alsace, Bourgogne, Champagne-Ardenne, Franche-Comté, Lorraine	10	9
Massif Central - Centre	Auvergne, Centre, Limousin	6	5
Overseas	Saint Pierre and Miquelon, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyana, Réunion, Mayotte, New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Wallis and Futuna.	3	3

Distribution of seats by interregional constituency

Nomination by parties

The evaluation of the effects of this reform is mixed, depending on the party, but also the original aim. The rise in the number of constituencies has automatically improved territorial links. On the other hand, turnout in the European elections has not increased, as 57% of voters abstained in June 2004, the highest abstention rate since 1979. Furthermore, parliamentarians' investment in European affairs and commitment to their interregional constituency have undoubtedly been tempered by the reintroduction in the 2003 law of the possibility of combining the role of MEP with that of heading a local body, which had been banned in 2000. In this respect, the role of MEP is subject to the same restrictions as that of national deputy²⁵¹. The simultaneous holding of posts is particularly prevalent among French MEPs, with 46 of the 78 outgoing French Members – almost two-thirds – in this situation.

The new electoral system in use in 2004 and the rise in the number of constituencies have noticeably **increased the margin of uncertainty among 'selectors'**: the calculation of eligible seats and anticipation of 'swing' seats (those which may be eligible) has become much more complex. However, while these new conditions could have prompted parties to prepare their candidacies further in advance, nomination procedures still tend to begin fairly late. This is undoubtedly down to the lack of interest generated by these elections, with nomination for European seats still considered by parties to be an adjustment variable allowing them to compensate candidates who were unsuccessful in local and national elections. In the case of the June 2004 elections, the nomination procedures did not begin until after the regional elections held in March that year, with the results of the latter borne in mind for the European nominations. For the 2009 elections, the procedures generally began in January for the selection

²⁵⁰ Source: report by Michèle Alliot-Marie to the French Council of Ministers of 28 January 2009. The constituency of 'French nationals outside France', which was considered for some time, was not created in the end.

²⁵¹ It is therefore possible to hold a seat in the European Parliament at the same time as only one of the following posts: regional councillor, general councillor, municipal councillor in a town of more than 3 500 inhabitants; since 2003, it has also been possible once more to combine this role with that of chairman of a general council or regional council or mayor of a town of any size.

of heads of list, but have largely yet to be completed for the rest of the list, with the 2010 regional elections once again interfering with the nominations for the European elections²⁵².

Moreover, the party structures remain fairly resistant to the electoral reforms. This observation should be tempered according to the party in question, but, even within those parties most anxious to ensure internal democracy, informal practices remain at the heart of the nomination procedures. While these informal arrangements are not peculiar to the European elections, they are particularly characteristic of the preparations for these elections, given the generally limited political influence of the outgoing office-holders. While the principle of nominating outgoing candidates often applies in the case of national deputies or mayors, many French MEPs cannot be sure of being re-selected as candidates, at least for eligible positions. Very few parties (the PS and MoDem, most notably) have established rules specific to the European elections. Other parties continue to apply generic (and often very vague) rules to all elections. Some strive to emphasise the principle of endorsement of the nominations by all party members (the PCF and the Greens). Others stress the predominant role of the national selection committee (the UMP). Other parties still, above all those at either end of the political spectrum, make no mention of an established procedure for election nominations, whether it is those on the far left (the LCR) or far right (the FN). Finally, some groupings that have announced their intention to put forward a list of candidates are still finding their feet and had not yet established party statutes as of January 2009 (the NPA and Parti de gauche (PG)).

The role of party members has been strengthened by this regionalisation of voting even if considerable disparities remain in terms of each party's political culture. Only those parties which already carried out regular consultations of their members (as regards both the party's political positions and the internal selection of candidates) have adapted and possibly stepped up this process. A distinction must also be drawn between parties for which such consultations function as a formal endorsement at the end of the selection process (the PS), those which accord them enough importance to influence the conclusions of the national selection committee (the Greens in 2004) and those which prefer to leave the decision to the votes of the intermediary bodies (the UMP).

It is generally the case that national bodies and, more specifically, party boards, continue to carry weight, however, because of their crucial role in negotiations with potential partners, regarding which ordinary members have little information and therefore little control. The 2003 reform offered strong encouragement to the smaller parties to open up the lists to other parties and associations or, potentially, to 'civil society' figures. In this way, the parties hope to pool their election gains, as a greater number of lists also effectively raises the real threshold (6.9% in the last elections) French parties must reach in order to win a seat. The difficulty in drawing up full lists for each constituency and/or gathering the necessary campaign funding also argue in favour of the presentation of joint lists by smaller parties. Most of the time, these negotiations produce a result at the last minute and decisions are often imposed from above rather than on the basis of consultations. The 2009 elections will no doubt see a number of alliances that have not yet been finalised. Joint lists are therefore expected from the PG/PCF and the UMP/Nouveau Centre/Gauche moderne, while the MPF is, as yet, undecided on its strategy and the Greens immediately set about forming an election coalition that brings together all representatives of political environmentalism. All of these alliances could yet expand to form other groupings (negotiations among the PG, PCF and NPA are still under way).

²⁵² These late procedures also make it difficult for outgoing French MEPs to anticipate the allocation of roles within committees and groups for the next term, while other national delegations are able to share out responsibilities in advance, thereby honing their strategy within Parliament.

In conclusion, it should be noted that this impact on the selection procedures and criteria adopted by parties continues, for the main part, to be shaped by national considerations, be it parties' internal constraints (statutes, political culture and degree of centralisation) and those that are a feature of the party system (interparty relationships and voting method). **Membership of a European political party does not appear to play a particular role** in the way in which nomination procedures are organised: in any case, no such indication has been given by those responsible for overseeing them, whether they are permanent officials or party leaders.

Criteria for selecting candidates

Any national of an EU Member State who has reached the age of 23 is eligible to stand. Non-French EU nationals should be resident in France or have resided there for at least six months and be eligible to stand for election in their country of origin. Politically, certain selection methods were characteristic of all parties at the last elections: the selection of media personalities over outgoing Members with known expertise and parties' use of the European elections as a means of compensation for previous defeats or non-selection for the national parliamentary elections and to reward party officials (those close to the leaders, permanent officials and parliamentarians at the beginning or end of their career). The preparations for the 2009 elections attest to the importance of the criterion of national prominence, in particular for the electable positions and those at the head of the list, with this continuing phenomenon evidence of the dominant role national organisations still play in relation to the choice of members. For instance, the UMP, at the direct request of the French President, decided in favour of two incumbent ministers for the first two places on the list for Ile-de-France: the Agriculture Minister, Michel Barnier, and the Justice Minister, Rachida Dati, with the latter's popularity rating, confirmed by polls, deemed sufficient to 'carry' the list headed by the former European Commissioner, a specialist in European affairs. Although such thinking continues to apply, the regionalisation of the elections has encouraged parties to select candidates that are better known locally. More specifically, the selection criteria of sex, ties with the national leadership and local prominence as a result of the holding of an elected post have undergone something of a re-assessment.

Parity, a legal requirement, has not radically altered the composition of the lists; the principle was already applied by some parties on both the right (the FN) and the left (the PS and the Greens). It is, however, viewed differently by the individual parties as regards the head of the list, on both the left and right. In spite of being responsible for the law on parity, the PS selected only one woman to be head of list – the lowest number among all the political groupings to win a seat. At the same time, the UMP, which originally opposed the idea, adhered to the principle as regards the head of the list.

Good relations with the national authorities are also a decisive factor for inclusion on lists that are chiefly the work of national selection committees, where the parties' main currents of opinion are generally represented. However, the regionalisation of the election has forced parties to take greater account of their middle ranks. In general, the new requirements sit alongside the old ones rather than replacing them: in addition to having close ties to the national authorities, the selected candidates should also demonstrate genuine campaigning activity at local level, borne out by party responsibilities and/or an elected role. Given the size of the new constituencies, this local presence is particularly necessary. Local ties not only allow potential candidates to draw on the support of campaigners with regard to the national authorities but

also to highlight their ability to conduct an effective, personalised and rousing campaign²⁵³. In the June 2009 elections, this criterion could rule out outgoing parliamentarians who have not managed, during their term, to make themselves known to voters and/or party members in the region which they represent.

The promotion of middle-ranking party members largely takes place via the selection of local office-holders, with the majority of French MEPs also locally elected officials. However, the drawing-up of lists at national level and the absence of any legal obligation to reside in the constituency in question mean that the lists can be adjusted according to national criteria. The proportion of deputies whose constituency is not the one in which they are based is therefore high within the FN (two Members out of seven were not elected in their constituency of origin, markedly lower for the PS and Greens (12.9 and 16.7% of MEPs respectively), and non-existent in the case of the UMP (the 17 Members elected in 2004 all represent a regional constituency corresponding to the one in which they carry out their local duties)²⁵⁴. The selection of local elected representatives to appear on the European election lists ties in with the particular national phenomenon whereby it is common to hold more than one office simultaneously. O. Costa, E. Kerrouche and J. Pélerin observe that regional councillors, accounting for a quarter of the French MEPs elected in 2004, are the best represented. The voting system, the constituencies and the timing of the elections all serve to strengthen the link between European and regional elections²⁵⁵.

Finally, it should be stressed that, in spite of the continuing practice of selecting national figures and party officials, on the one hand, and the increased emphasis on local ties, on the other, **the role set aside for outgoing Members and those who can claim some kind of experience in European affairs is becoming greater**. While the gratitude shown to outgoing candidates varies from one party to the next, overall there tends to be an increasing number of re-elections among French MEPs. Approximately one-third of MEPs were re-elected in past elections, but this proportion grew to half in 2004²⁵⁶. This improved reward of expertise is the result of a – late but genuine – realisation by French political leaders of the growing importance of the European Parliament as the Treaties evolve²⁵⁷. It is also connected with the gradual emergence of a group of ‘European professionals’ within Parliament who have chosen to make their career there and are being appointed to positions of responsibility²⁵⁸. It is a rather unexpected consequence of the regionalisation of the elections. While their predecessors faced great uncertainty as to how to ensure their re-selection²⁵⁹, MEPs now tend to focus on their local position. The 2003 reform could therefore have set off a virtuous circle, whereby locally known candidates with experience of Europe are likely to be selected. This tendency has yet to be confirmed given the contingency of the 2004 results and the continuing appeal of national posts for a section of MEPs: six of the 31 French Socialist MEPs won seats in the 2007 parliamentary and 2008 senatorial elections.

²⁵³ From an article cited in O. Costa, E. Kerrouche and J. Pélerin, p. 120.

²⁵⁴ Source: Ibid, p. 122.

²⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 124.

²⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 130.

²⁵⁷ C. Beaune, T. Chopin, ‘L’influence française au sein du Parlement européen à mi-mandat. Quelle stratégie à l’horizon 2009?’, Horizons stratégiques, No 4, April 2007. See also Nicolas Sarkozy’s attitude during the French Presidency of the EU in the second half of 2008: C. Lequesne, O. Rozenberg, ‘The French Presidency of 2008: The Unexpected Agenda’, Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, No 3 op, 2008.

²⁵⁸ W. Beauvallet, ‘Institutionnalisation et professionnalisation de l’Europe politique, le cas des eurodéputés français’, Politique européenne, No 9, Winter 2003, pp. 99-122 ; J. Navarro, ‘Les rôles représentatifs au Parlement européen: l’improbable convergence des modèles de conduite’, Revue française de science politique, due to be published in 2009.

²⁵⁹ O. Costa, *Le Parlement européen, Assemblée délibérante*, Bruxelles, edited by the University of Brussels, 2001.

The Parties

The results of the 2004 European elections show that eight parties managed to garner more than 2% of the votes: the PS (Socialist Party), the UMP (Union for a Popular Movement), the UDF (Union for French Democracy), which became the MoDem in 2007, the FN (National Front), the Greens, the MPF (Movement for France) the PCF (French Communist Party), and two far-left parties, LO (Workers' Struggle) and LCR (Revolutionary Communist League), which appeared on the same list.

Party	Votes	%	Diff.	Seats	Group in the European Parliament
PS	4 960 756	28.9	+ 6.9	31	Party of European Socialists
UMP	2 856 368	16.6	+ 3.8	17	European People's Party-European Democrats
UDF	2 053 446	12.0	+ 2.7	11	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
FN	1 684 947	9.8	+ 4.1	7	Non-attached, except 2007: Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty
Greens	1 271 394	7.4	- 2.3	6	European Greens/European Free Alliance
PCF	1 009 976	5.9	- 0.9	3	European United Left/Nordic Green Left
MPF	1 145 839	6.7	- 6.4	3	Independence/Democracy
LO-LCR	440 134	2.6	- 2.6	0	-
CPNT ²⁶⁰	297 273	1.7	- 5.1	0	-
Other parties	1 447 225	8.4	- 0.4	0	-
<i>Total</i>	<i>17 168 995</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>±0.0</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>-</i>

Results of the 2004 European elections in France

The UMP (Union pour un Mouvement Populaire – Union for a Popular Movement)

Party structure and statutes

The majority party and France's largest in terms of members (277 000 at present) is, by tradition, very centralised in structure. The *droit de tendance* (the right to form movements within the party) is enshrined in the party statutes, but little recourse is made to it in practice. This centralisation has increased further since Nicolas Sarkozy took the helm in 2004: internal debates and direct votes by members are rare, except when it comes to choosing a leader.

In the event, the President's coming to power has not really altered the party's internal practices. In order to reflect the new situation, the statutes were amended in September 2007: Nicolas Sarkozy had resigned from his party responsibilities the day after he was elected President and the post of chairman was in fact removed from the organisational chart, showing that the real leadership remained in the hands of the Elysée. The party is now run, therefore, by a General Secretary (Xavier Bertrand, the former Minister for Social Cohesion and Employment, who was appointed General Secretary on 22 January 2009) and two deputy General Secretaries (Éric Besson, the new Minister for Immigration and National Identity, and Nathalie Kosciusko-

²⁶⁰ Chasse, pêche, nature et traditions (Hunting, Fishing, Nature, Tradition).

Morizet, the former Secretary of State for the Environment and now Secretary of State for the Digital Economy). Apart from Xavier Bertrand, who no longer holds any government post, the national party board more or less corresponds to the French Government, as further reflected by the composition of the political bureau and the national selection committee. In any case, the most important decisions (including those relating to election preparations) are taken by leading members with close links to the Head of State: the National Secretary for Elections and the new Employment Minister, Brice Hortefeux, is one of Nicolas Sarkozy's closest colleagues. The President has also made no secret of his involvement in the running of the party and, consequently, in the preparations for the European elections, as shown by the fact that he chaired the last UMP council, at which the heads of list for the forthcoming elections were approved²⁶¹.

The rules on the selection procedure have been subject to only slight changes since 2004²⁶²: a national selection committee (composed of the 30 most important party figures, including the Prime Minister) is appointed by the political bureau. In the case of all elections, the committee is authorised to lay the groundwork for the nominations: it interviews the political heads of the departments (*départements*), reports to the political bureau and consults the departmental committees. Finally, its definitive proposals are put to the vote within the National Council. The recent amendment of the statutes has, however, made the consultation of departmental committees compulsory, with the possibility for the departmental committee in question or national selection committee to call for a members' vote.

It remains to be seen whether these consultation procedures, and the possibility of seeking members' opinions, which would allow the selection process to become less centralised, will be applied. As things stand, this is only possible for the second stage of the procedure, which concerns the drawing-up of the rest of the list, the heads of list and candidates for electable positions having already been decided by the Head of State and his advisers.

The distinction between these two stages is not laid down anywhere in the statutes and nor are the arrangements for the preparation of the nominations by the national selection committee. At the beginning of December, the committee appointed eight *préfigurateurs*, politicians responsible for carrying out an initial examination of the applications in each interregional constituency²⁶³ and contacting and, possibly, interviewing outgoing Members and departmental leaders. It was in the context of this initial examination that the national selection committee worked with the Elysée to determine the heads of lists.

Selection strategy and criteria

The UMP is the first party to have officially finalised its list of eligible candidates (at its National Council of 24 January 2009). The aim, according to Michel Barnier, is to make the most of the momentum gained from the French Presidency of the Union²⁶⁴. For the presidential party, the priority is to erase memories of previous defeats: Nicolas Sarkozy won only 12.8% of votes in 1999, behind the PS but also behind the sovereigntist Pasqua-Villiers list. In 2004 the UMP was unable to garner more than 16.6% of votes, well behind the PS (28.9%). Furthermore, the

²⁶¹ The press also drew attention to this direct involvement of the Head of State ('M. Sarkozy a choisi lui-même, avec B. Hortefeux, responsable des élections à l'UMP, les personnalités éligibles', *Le Monde*, 24 January 2009).

²⁶² The procedure is set out in section IX of the internal rules of procedure.

²⁶³ For example, Pierre Lequiller, a national deputy and Chairman of the National Assembly's Committee on European Affairs, was the *préfigurateur* for the Ile-de-France region.

²⁶⁴ *Le Monde*, 24 January 2009.

European elections have traditionally been problematic for ruling parties, especially as they fall midway through their term. In order to get ahead, the UMP seems willing to open up its list to the Nouveau centre (created following a split with the MoDem and currently forecast to win 2% of the vote) or even to some members of the Gauche moderne (which has emerged from the PS).

The selection criteria have not been formalised to a great degree: as with all the parties, a balance has been sought between figures of national prominence, elected officials well known locally and former MEPs likely to be allocated positions of responsibility in Strasbourg. Popularity polls were carried out in order to weed out the most contentious potential candidates. The most consistently applied criterion is undoubtedly that of gender parity: while it was adhered to with regard to the heads of list in 2004, this will not be the case in 2009 (five men and two women have been selected to head the lists), but the principle should apply to the remaining electable positions. However, the 'diversity' criterion, which enabled Tokia Saïfi to be selected in 2004, does not appear to have been taken into account (furthermore, this outgoing Member has been relegated to an unelectable position).

Ministers are barely more represented than in 2004 (when only two members of government were selected)²⁶⁵. As was the case then, it is a question both of ensuring an honourable departure for the victims of a cabinet reshuffle and allowing the list to benefit from their national prominence. Three ministers overall were nominated in 2009 for electable positions: Michel Barnier (unallocated at present) and Rachida Dati from Ile-de-France and Valérie Létard from the Nouveau Centre for the North region, with the latter also the only non-UMP head of list selected thus far. In addition, six outgoing Members out of 17 appear to be in an electable position. Only three outgoing heads of list have been kept in this position, compared with five in 2004. This relatively high turnover rate makes it possible to leave considerable room for local elected officials²⁶⁶. In some cases, regional prominence has made up for an absence of other posts: accordingly, Dominique Baudis, Mayor of Toulouse until 2001, will head the South-West list. Some civil society figures also feature on the lists: the farmers' union, the FNSEA, which was also represented in 2004, when its Chairman, Jean-Michel Lemétayer headed the list for the West region, is again present, this time in third position, with Luc Guyau, Mr Lemétayer's predecessor, at the head. On the other hand, the former Formula One driver Ari Vatanen, who was selected in 2004, was unable to obtain an electable position (South-East). Overall, the potential election performance for each of the figures considered for the electable positions, and the closeness of their ties with the most important local elected officials, who could provide support for their candidacy, appears to have won out over recognition of experience or expertise in European affairs. Françoise Grossetête, Vice-Chairwoman of the EPP-ED, had to fight to hold on to her position at the top of the South-East list, while Alain Lamassoure, despite being the UMP's National Secretary for European Affairs, has been demoted to the uncertain third position.

The UMP's selection procedure therefore remains extremely centralised, to the extent that the final decision seems to lie exclusively with the party board, which itself blurs with the national government. Validation by party members remains at the discretion of the national authorities and endorsement by the party assembly comes only at the end of the process; it is nothing more

²⁶⁵ They were Tokia Saïfi, Secretary of State for Sustainable Development, and Roselyne Bachelot, Environment Minister.

²⁶⁶ E.g. Dominique Riquet, Mayor of Valenciennes (North), the former Mayor of Amiens, Brigitte Fouré, the outgoing MEP and municipal councillor Jean-Paul Gauzès, and, heading the list for the West region, the President of the General Council of Maine et Loire, Christophe Béchu.

than ratification and formalisation. However, it appears that the criteria of local ties were taken into account to a greater degree than in the previous selection.

The PS (Parti socialiste – Socialist Party)

Party structure and statutes

Unlike that of the UMP, the structure of the PS is pluralist (with the different movements sharing power internally) and decentralised (the departmental federations enjoy considerable autonomy) and a members' vote is generally held in the case of all internal elections and election nominations. Along with the senatorial elections, the European elections are probably those regarding which the national party board has the largest role to play. However, it is no less bound by the requirements of the structure and political culture of the party and it must give substantial consideration in its selection to internal balance, both geographical and political.

The electoral reform resulted in an amendment of the statutes in 2004²⁶⁷. The applications to stand as candidate are therefore submitted directly to the First Secretary (the party leader), who immediately informs the departmental leaders (known as federal first secretaries) in question. The national bureau (the party's governing body) sets up an election committee, appointed on the basis proportionality. This committee in turn appoints working groups (one for each interregional constituency), which include the federal first secretaries and regional secretaries, with the national secretaries to the federations and for elections also called to play a part. Based on the report by the working groups, the committee draws up a provisional list for each constituency. The eight lists are then submitted to the National Council (the party assembly), which adopts them and then puts them to the vote among party members. The final result is adopted at a national convention.

This new procedure therefore involves a large number of people and makes it necessary to carry out preliminary negotiations with departmental officials. The discussion and consultation stages should be distinguished from the decision-making process itself: the conclusions of the working groups are merely opinions and, when it comes down to it, any disputes are settled and the ultimate decision taken by the election committee, generally the day before the National Council convenes to adopt the lists. In this regard, the criteria of internal balance among the various currents take precedence over other considerations. The First Secretary therefore plays an important role in presiding over the debates and in the final decision. Furthermore, the two-stage process (appointment of the head of list, followed by the remaining candidates) has been replaced by overall nominations, which limits the likelihood of deadlock.

Ultimately it is this consensus among the leaders of the different currents that should determine the result rather than their respective numerical weight: there are enough filters along the way for all the currents to be generally satisfied with the final agreement, with the members' vote serving only to formalise this agreement.

Selection strategy and criteria

The finalisation of the selection will happen quite late on for the 2009 elections: the National Council for the adoption of the lists has been called for the end of February, and the final convention, which will ratify the lists, for the end of March. This timetable complies with the

²⁶⁷ These statutes are generally far more detailed than those of the UMP. There are therefore specific articles referring to the European elections. See Article 7.13.1 of the new internal rules of procedure (2004).

internal rules: the PS changed leader in November 2008, at its last conference, and the balance of the lists should reflect the respective sway of the different currents, measured according to members' votes on the policy statements adopted at this conference. However, the timetable is also affected by external factors relating to the present incarnation of the parties to its left. On the face of it, the PS should, as in 2004, present its own lists in all the regions, as its traditional partners have already forged their own system of alliances. The Greens are involved in a coalition that unites all the political environmentalists; the PCF has joined with the Parti de gauche, which itself hopes to open up a 'left-wing front' to incorporate all those parties opposed to the Lisbon Treaty (including the future NPA) and therefore seems unlikely to ally itself with the PS. The only parties with which it could conceivably sign an agreement would be one of the far-left parties (which have not had a European Parliament seat since 2004), but which also seem tempted by an agreement with the MoDem, and Jean-Pierre Chevènement's MRC (the sovereigntist Mouvement Républicain et Citoyen), which would like a united list for all the left-wing parties but has not yet adopted a precise strategy. In any case, possible agreements with these two parties could concern only a few seats.

The selection criteria have not yet been definitively established. The national bureau is the only body empowered to lay down quantitative criteria (e.g. the number of women heading lists, the percentage of new candidates, the number of seats set aside for civil society figures and/or partners etc.). Any specifications of this nature should be established in the first half of February, but it is likely that the national party board will not wish to arouse debate on these matters. It is impossible, in view of the size of the current delegation, for all outgoing Members to be given an electable position. In 2004 the number of outgoing MEPs allocated an electable position was fairly high (11 out of 31). However, it should also be noted that the success enjoyed by the PS in these elections was, to some extent, unexpected: the party had anticipated winning only around 20 seats. The criterion of close relations with the national authorities does not appear to have lost any relevance following the regionalisation of the elections: of the 31 MEPs elected in 2004, 25 had held a position at national level²⁶⁸. The electoral reform mainly had an effect on the promotion of departmental officials (four federal first secretaries out of 31 were elected), in terms both of their selection for an electable position and their role in the negotiations. These party members have proved to be particularly keen, irrespective of any allegiance to a certain current, for their federation to be represented in electable positions. At the same time, important local elected officials have also been particularly rewarded. Regionalisation has also spelt failure for the objective of non-combination of posts announced by the party at its 2003 conference²⁶⁹.

The only definite objectives for the time being are an increase in the number of women heading lists (in undefined proportions), adherence to the principle of parity regarding the overall number of Members (a goal that was reached in 2004) and the fair representation of all currents. This last issue is all the more thorny as it has been bound up, since the internal referendum on the European Constitutional Treaty, with the question of geographical representation. As the first four nominations received relatively similar levels of support, the seats will have to be split in rather a fragmented way among the different currents, with the First Secretary, Martine Aubry, receiving only the third largest quota in number: the current represented by Ségolène Royal, the former presidential candidate, should obtain 30% of seats and that of Bertrand

²⁶⁸ While 10 years earlier, in 1994, this was the case for six MEPs out of 15. See C. Bachelot, *Groupons nous et demain. Une sociologie des dirigeants du PS depuis 1993*, political science thesis, Sciences Po, 2009.

²⁶⁹ Although the majority motion specified that no candidate should simultaneously appear on a list for the regional and for the European elections, the decoupling of the selection procedures ultimately resulted in four regional vice-presidents and two vice-presidents of the General Council being elected to the European Parliament (not all of whom agreed to resign from these posts once they had become MEPs).

Delanoë, Mayor of Paris, and Martine Aubry a quarter each, while the current led by Benoît Hamon, which opposes the Lisbon Treaty, could lay claim to 18.5% of the seats. This allocation will be all the more difficult given that ideological differences on European integration persist among Martine Aubry's followers and that the individual currents are not equally represented in all the departmental federations. The Aubry ticket has its highest level of support in the north-eastern quarter of the country, but should be able to assert itself in other regions of France by appointing allies outside its election territory. The distribution of seats by current should, as is traditionally the case in the PS, result in internal negotiations among the 'official' movements that announced themselves at the last party conference. Within each of these, there remain 'historical' sympathies, the real weight of which is difficult to assess, but which demand a share of the election seats the PS has to offer.

Overall, therefore, the three decisive criteria for the selection of candidates and the structuring of lists remain gender, federation of origin and current. While middle-ranking and local elected officials now play a greater role, that of the individual currents and the national leaders has not diminished as a result.

The MoDem (Mouvement démocrate – Democratic Movement)

Party structure and statutes

Formed the day after the June 2007 presidential elections, the MoDem is a new party lacking the campaign and financial resources of the UMP and PS (it has around 60 000 members, compared with 270 000 for the UMP and 160 000 for the PS). The party, which was founded by François Bayrou, is, however, composed of members of the former UDF (Union pour la Démocratie Française – Union for French Democracy), which came third in the 2004 elections, winning 11 seats. At an organisational level, the MoDem claims to be better structured than its former incarnation. Unlike the UDF, it is no longer a confederation of movements and associations but a unified party. Mr Bayrou's party remains decentralised (with the departments enjoying relative autonomy), however, and has attached unprecedented importance to consultations with members, reflecting the official desire to equip the party with a 'democratic' and 'transparent' structure that is lacking in organisations on the political right. In fact, from the point of view of the party statutes at least, many of its provisions seem to be akin to those adopted by the PS or even the Greens. In practice, the *droit de tendance* is not recognised and decisions continue to be taken centrally.

The individual procedure for the European elections is much less detailed than in the PS statutes. It is simply stated that, as for all elections, the selection of candidates is the responsibility of the party's National Council²⁷⁰. A year before the elections, the party's executive bureau must appoint a working group charged with drafting a report for the National Council (the party assembly) on the profile of suitable candidates (all members may submit their own statement to this working group on the attributes of suitable candidates). Applications to stand as candidate are then submitted to the working group, which examines them and makes its recommendations to the executive bureau. Finally, the selection is agreed within the National Council, on the basis of a bureau proposal and after party members have been consulted.

For the 2009 elections it was decided that the working group would be led by Jean-Marie Vanlerenberghe, Senator-Mayor of Arras, a close colleague of François Bayrou and himself a

²⁷⁰ See Article 13 of the internal rules.

former MEP. Mr Vanlerenberghe called for applications from members and these applications were first submitted directly to the national party board (without having been vetted beforehand by the departmental authorities). It appears that the party board received around 500 applications in December. In January, the executive bureau examined the proposals. Members should be consulted (online) on an initial selection at the beginning of February, with the complete lists to be adopted on 7 February by the political bureau, before being ratified on 8 February. This procedure, which appears to be very democratic, should be judged in the light of its practical application: within the working group, François Bayrou's opinion carries the most weight in terms of the allocation of electable positions. The online consultation of members is indicative only and does not concern the heads of list, while the departmental authorities are rarely or never consulted. In fact, a week before the official ratification of the lists, not all the proposed heads of list were known.

Selection strategy and criteria

Operating from a position of isolation, at first desired but now endured by the organisation, the MoDem appears to have made the opening-up of its lists to individual figures, preferably prominent ones, one of the pillars of its strategy. The selection criteria differ noticeably from those employed by the PS and UMP. With no more than a dozen electable positions at most (the most recent polls indicate that the party will receive around 12% of votes), the decision as to whether to favour outgoing Members with proven expertise (which tended to be the case in 2004, when six out of eight heads of list were outgoing MEPs valued by the European Parliament) or to select figures well known at national level is a difficult one.

The particularly pressing need this year to find individuals able to attract voters other than the party's usual electorate explains why it would appear, from the information available at present, that the latter option has won out for these elections, at least as far as the heads of list are concerned. It seems, therefore, that the South-East constituency will be fought by Jean-Luc Bennahmias (who recently defected from the Greens) and Azouz Begag, a media figure representing 'diversity'²⁷¹. The journalist Jean-François Kahn is expected to head the list for the East region. Finally, Marielle de Sarnez, deputy party leader and François Bayrou's right-hand woman, should be selected for Ile-de-France. In any case, this sort of strategy restricts the choice to those close to the party leader and rules out the possibility for the election of middle-ranking officials, who, within the PS and UMP, would otherwise find themselves promoted.

The FN (Front national - National Front)

Statutes and organisation

The FN came fourth in 2004, winning seven European Parliament seats. For the far-right party, the European elections are crucial, as the electoral system provides their only chance of winning a parliamentary seat, given that the majority voting system is used for the National Assembly elections. The selection procedure for the European elections is not laid down in the FN statutes, an indicator of how the party operates, as it is structured entirely around the charismatic leadership of Jean-Marie Le Pen. The procedure is therefore a routine and personalised one: the applications are submitted directly to the party leader, who convenes a restricted election committee, composed of the party's highest-ranking officials (Bruno Gollnisch, Jean-Marie Le Pen's right-hand man, FN delegate-general and outgoing MEP, Louis Alliot, General Secretary,

²⁷¹ Minister-delegate for equal opportunities within the Villepin Government (UMP) from 2005 to 2007.

head of the discipline and conciliation committee, national election officer and official responsible for the federations). The potential heads of list must appear before the election committee, the final decision is made by the party leader and the lists are announced according to an undefined timetable. In the case of the forthcoming elections, the hearings took place in October and four heads of list have already been announced (the remaining four are therefore yet to be disclosed). It is worthy of comment that the committee members themselves have in fact been selected. Jean-Marie Le Pen will head the list for the South-East constituency, his daughter (deputy chairwoman in charge of education and propaganda) has been selected for the North-West list, and Louis Alliot will be head of the South-West list. The election committee will play a full role only in regard to the allocation of the remaining places on the list. However, even then, the decision lies more firmly with the national authorities than with regional and departmental officials and/or with the heads of list themselves.

In the apparent aim of efficiency, whereby members' involvement is seen, at best, as a factor slowing down decision-making and, at worst, as an opportunity for outside elements to manipulate the results (as is often the case within extreme parties, suspicions of entryism are easily provoked), a basic vote is never called. It is the 'sovereign decision' of Jean-Marie Le Pen that confers internal legitimacy on the selection.

Selection strategy and criteria

The FN should, in theory, draw up its own lists in all constituencies, with the exception of one or two seats allocated to outside figures. As shown by the 2004 elections, it is the party's highest-ranking officials who are elected as MEPs, which greatly restricts any turnover. The criterion of parity is often circumvented: third place on a list can be considered electable even if the party does not anticipate winning more than two seats, with the party leadership expecting the woman in second position to resign the day after her election²⁷².

The main criterion applied by Jean-Marie Le Pen is the maintenance of internal balance, which generally takes precedence over the criterion of local ties. Since the 2004 election the main issue has been to arbitrate between the supporters of the two hopefults to succeed Jean-Marie Le Pen as party leader (most likely in 2010), Bruno Gollnisch and Marine Le Pen, who has her father's support. In spite of the centralised nature of the decision, it is far from true that the founding father's choices are always accepted. The FN selection procedures are characterised by relatively frequent acts of dissidence followed by exclusion. Carl Lang, the former General Secretary of the National Front (1988-1995 and 1999-2005) and an outgoing MEP, has, for example, been suspended since November 2008, after he fought to regain his own place on the list in spite of the fact that Marine Le Pen, of whom he is an avowed opponent, had been selected. Jean-Claude Martinez, another outgoing Member who refused to be allocated an unelectable position, was suspended at the same time. In January, he announced the formation of a new political structure 'for the continuation of his political career', which could propose lists in other regions.

The Greens (Les Verts)

As for MoDem, the European elections have proven to be crucial for the Greens. Their Members of the European Parliament, of whom there were six in 2004 but are now only five, following the departure of Jean-Luc Bennhamias to François Bayrou's party in 2007, also represent

²⁷² See *Le Monde*, 4 May 2004: 'Derrière M. Gollnisch, chef de file dans la circonscription de l'Est, le FN - parité oblige - cherche une candidate acceptant de démissionner après l'élection pour permettre à M. Bild de siéger, le cas échéant'.

considerable election resources for a party that has only four national deputies and five senators. Strategically, however, the Greens find themselves severely hampered: after winning 7.4% of the vote in 2004, they obtained only 1.57% of votes in the presidential elections, meaning that they are required to seek support beyond their party in order to save their MEPs and/or improve on their previous performance.

At their conference in November 2008, the Greens therefore adopted the proposal made by Daniel Cohn-Bendit during the summer of presenting joint lists covering all movements supportive of or involved in political environmentalism. The idea was to bring together under the same banner ('Europe écologie') the colleagues of José Bové (the former leader of the second largest French farming union, the Confédération paysanne, and spokesman for Via Campesina), the popular television presenter, Nicolas Hulot (one of the people behind the *Grenelle de l'Environnement* (Round Table on the Environment) launched by Nicolas Sarkozy), Greenpeace and the Greens themselves. However, this grouping has also highlighted the marginal role played by the Greens in political environmentalism, with the party board having to join with its new partners to form a campaign steering committee. Under the leadership of Daniel Cohn-Bendit, they have had to sign an agreement that grants them only three of the expected eight electable positions (provided the joint lists obtain the 10% of the vote currently attributed to them by the polls).

This arrangement has turned the usual procedure upside down. Alongside the PS, the Greens are undoubtedly the party that attaches the most importance to the principles of internal democracy, the representation of different currents (the national headquarters are composed, like those of the PS, to reflect the number of supporters of each current), decentralisation and the consultation of members. The negotiations have, however, forced the party to adjust its timetables. In 2004 the results of members' votes in the large constituencies in some cases altered the initial choices made by the election committee. In 2009 the opening-up of the lists to non-party members has disrupted the basic consultation procedure. According to the timetable set by the conference, finalisation of the negotiations with partners on the first places on the list is supposed to follow a vote by campaigners. However, the partners reached a preliminary agreement on the choice of the heads of list in December, prior to the vote, which took place in January as planned. The Interregional National Council (the party assembly) convened on 18 January therefore had no choice but to endorse (although more than a third of members, mainly on the left of the party, abstained from the vote) this agreement concluded outside the usual procedure and which, in some cases (in the West and South-East regions) contradicted the choices made by members earlier in the month.

In general, the approval of the allocation of electable positions (the remaining places should be approved at the end of February) also resulted in changes to the criteria applied in 2004. While local ties played a decisive role in campaigners' choices in 2004, it was inevitably the figures most associated with the new grouping that were selected for 2009. The political agreements and media prominence were therefore the most important factors, explaining why the outgoing Members (with the exception of Hélène Flautre in the North) did not see their places on the lists renewed. The other lists are headed by Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Eva Joly (a former judge specialising in corruption) in Ile-de-France, José Bové in the South-West, Yannick Jadot (former Chairman of Greenpeace) in the West, Sandrine Bélier (the former Director of France Nature Environnement) in the East, Jean-Paul Besset, Nicolas Hulot's right-hand man, in the Centre and the former deputy Michèle Rivasi in the South-East.

The weakening of the party's position in the previous elections has therefore forced it not only to open up its lists but also to dispense with some of its organisational arrangements.

The MPF (Mouvement pour la France – Movement for France)

The MPF (sovereigntist and to the right of the UMP) led by Philippe de Villiers also attaches particular value to the European elections. Moreover, it was following the 1994 elections that the party was formed. In addition to its presidency of the Vendée General Council and two national parliamentary seats, the MPF's three MEPs (including the party leader himself) provide the party with a large share of its resources. Since it was founded, the MPF has always stood in the European elections, refusing to ally itself with the FN to its right and the RPR, and later, the UMP to its left. This strategy won it some success in 1994 (12% of the vote) and 1999 (13.5% of the vote on the Pasqua-Villiers list²⁷³). However, the MPF managed to win only 6.6% of votes in 2004. The party leadership puts this defeat down to the new electoral system used in 2004, with the new threshold benefiting the large parties. Philippe de Villiers's poor performance in the 2007 presidential elections (2.5% of the votes) has also left the organisation in a position of weakness. The MPF therefore finds itself in a complex situation as regards the 2009 elections. It clearly hopes to benefit from the 'no' result in the 2005 European referendum. Furthermore, it joined the European network Libertas in June 2008, headed by the leader of the Irish 'no' campaign, which is running a joint campaign (under the same banner) involving all the 'Eurorealist' parties.

The MPF has competition in this area from the FN and a new, small party led by Nicolas Dupont-Aignan (Debout la République – Arise the Republic), which was founded in November 2008 following a split from the presidential party. Debout la République (DLR), which also campaigns under a sovereigntist slogan, intends to present lists in all constituencies. For now, the MPF's strategy remains open; it is possible that it will have to go back on its refusal to ally itself with the UMP, or that it will instead form closer links with the DLR (which has ruled out any cooperation with the presidential party). In any case, it seems that the party leadership is prepared to forego a number of head of list positions, without having specified for the moment with which partners it is likely to forge an alliance.

The timetable for the MPF's selection procedure seems to be particularly last-minute, but it is also down to the informal and relatively adaptable nature of the organisation. Furthermore, its leaders insist that it is not so much a party as a 'movement', which favours action in the service of a charismatic leader and an ideology over the perpetuation of the organisation itself. As with the FN, the selection procedure is not governed by the statutes: the applications are collected by the General Secretary, who submits the various lists to the chairman. After consulting the political bureau, the chairman takes a decision. In fact, the low number of electable positions restricts the leadership to an automatic renewal of the positions of outgoing Members (who all occupy posts in the organisation's executive board). The centralised decision on the heads of list means that the rest of the list can be decided in a more flexible and decentralised way, the heads of list having some say in the election of the candidates beneath them.

That being the case, local ties are not afforded a great deal of consideration, as the party leadership evidently views the interregional constituencies as too small for their candidates to benefit from any prominence at this level. Ideological closeness, candidates' possible membership of organisational networks and, above all, continued relations with the movement's

²⁷³ The MPF formed a short-lived alliance with the ex-RPR minister, leading to the founding of the RPF (Rassemblement pour la France – Rally for France) following the elections, but it reclaimed its independence in 2000 in order to relaunch the MPF in its original form.

leadership are all decisive factors. In any case, and in line with the principle of a charismatic and centralised leadership, members play no part in the selection procedure.

The PCF (Parti communiste français – French Communist Party)

The electoral reform has been noticeably unkind to the PCF, as it gained six seats in 1999 with 6.7% of the vote, and only three in 2004, despite winning 5.2% of the vote. The European elections also come at a time of internal upheaval. At its conference in mid-December, the delegates ratified an agreement with the fledgling Parti de gauche of Jean-Luc Mélenchon (a new party that emerged following a split from the PS, which is holding its constituent conference on 1 February). This call for a ‘progressive European front’ should see the presentation of joint lists and is likely to involve other leftist groups that have an anti-capitalist agenda and that oppose the Lisbon Treaty (contact has been made with the NPA, but also with the LO, the Parti des Travailleurs (Workers’ Party) and the entire alter-globalisation movement). The party leadership has used this agreement to shake off its image as the conservative element of a party in decline. The development also marks a shift in the alliances forged by the PCF. After joining the European United Left in 2004 (which aims to bring together all the Union’s anticapitalist leftist parties), the 2005 united campaign against the Constitutional Treaty and the failure of the joint ‘no’ ticket in the presidential elections, it is now a question for the PCF of moving beyond the local alliances it has traditionally forged with the PS and assuming the leadership of a new coalition by capitalising on the protests against Europe’s ‘drift towards liberalism’.

Given the uncertainty surrounding these alliances, the selection procedure has not really begun. Nevertheless, it should take place according to the statutes, as befits a party of the masses, which the PCF claims to be²⁷⁴. The model of democratic centralism appears to be relatively enduring, with members systematically consulted but at the end of the process and with a very restricted *droit de tendance*. The applications to stand as candidate, which come from local general assemblies and the departmental or national authorities, are submitted to the National Council (the party assembly), which is supposed to draw up lists in the aim of securing as broad a consensus as possible. This body holds an initial vote and the lists that ‘receive the most votes’ (with no further clarification) are then put to the vote of individual members. Those that receive a majority of votes are adopted. This ‘vertical’ procedure, which is essentially based on internal power relations, makes it possible to draw up lists that are relatively heterogeneous but which are automatically approved by the majority of members.

The LO (Lutte ouvrière – Workers’ Struggle), LCR (Ligue communiste révolutionnaire – Revolutionary Communist League) and the NPA (Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste – New Anticapitalist Party)

In 2004 the two small Trotskyist parties renewed the alliance forged for the regional elections and drew up joint lists for the European elections. This alliance did not lead to the success hoped for: it won only 2.6% of votes and no seats in the European Parliament, in spite of the fact that Olivier Besancenot (leader of the LCR), head of the Ile-de-France list, had won more than 4.5% of votes in the 2002 presidential elections. The aim was to offset the effects of the electoral reform by adding candidates with relatively comparable election potential²⁷⁵. The head of list positions were shared out between the two organisations and allocated to the most visible leaders of these

²⁷⁴ See Article 18 of the statutes.

²⁷⁵ Arlette Laguiller of the LO won more than 5.5% of votes in 2002, but only 1.3% in 2007.

parties: Arlette Laguiller, Olivier Besancenot and Alain Krivine headed the lists for Ile-de-France, the South-West and the North-West respectively. The allocation of the rest of the places on the list revealed real differences as to the type of candidates promoted by the two organisations: while the LCR was very open to activist partners and alter-globalisationists, the LO reserved its places exclusively for party activists and a few trade union members. The two organisations have, however, reasserted mutual independence for the 2009 elections, representing deep ideological and strategic divergences: the LO intends to concentrate in its campaign on upholding workers' (i.e. mainly employees' and manual workers') interests, which it considers to be overlooked by the LCR. The LCR, meanwhile, which should become the NPA (Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste - New Anticapitalist Party) at the beginning of February 2009, plans to open up its lists to campaigners from the joint collectives formed in 2005 and to associations and environmental, feminist and alter-globalisationist movements. The alliance strategy is still subject to debate within the future grouping, with a minority in favour of the proposal for a united left made by the PCF and Parti de Gauche (PG). The LCR leadership has postponed the decision until its constituent conference, but has voiced serious reservations about the PCF and PG, which it suspects of being prepared to betray a united movement in order to support the PS.

In keeping with the LO's reputation for opacity, its statutes cannot be consulted. Those of the LCR, on the other hand, were amended in 2003. The party is clearly moving away from adherence to the 'Leninist' principle, and, accordingly, towards democratic centralism, and generally attaches more importance to the consultation of members and internal pluralism, but has not specified the procedure to be followed for the selection of election candidates. The NPA statutes have yet to be drawn up.

ITALY

The report is divided into three sections. First of all, we will look at the legal framework governing eligibility criteria and the nomination of candidates to stand in the elections, while the electoral system used for the European elections will be described in detail. We will then examine the rules adopted by Italian parties for the drawing-up of candidate lists. In the third and final part, we will look at the selection procedure actually employed by the parties, which will enable us to analyse not only the formal rules that have been laid down but also their practical application.

Legal provisions

In the first section of this report, we will look at the two main aspects of the rules governing the 2009 European elections: electoral law and the electoral system²⁷⁶. The legal basis for the electoral rules applicable to the 2009 European elections is provided by the following legislation: *Law No 18/1979 of 24 January 1979, Decree-Law No 408 of 24 June 1994, Law No 78/2004 of 27 March 2004, Law No 90/2004 of 8 April 2004, Decree-Law No 3 of 27 January 2009 and Law No 10/2009 of 20 February 2009*.

Set out below is a brief description of certain elements of Italian electoral law:

Rules governing voters and candidates

According to the above legislation, all Italian citizens who are over the age of 18 and included on the electoral register are entitled to vote. Nationals of other EU Member States may also vote, provided that, three months prior to the elections, they submit an official request to the mayor of the municipality in which they live for inclusion on its electoral register. This entitles them to vote in Italy for members of the Italian delegation to the European Parliament.

With regard to the right to stand for election to the European Parliament, the above legislation stipulates that candidates must have reached the age of 25 before the election date, be an Italian national or nationals of another EU Member State, reside in one of the EU Member States, not have been deprived of their civil and political rights in Italy and not be standing in the same elections in another Member State.

This means that citizens of other EU Member States are eligible to stand, provided that they meet the criteria laid down by Italian law and have not been stripped of the right to stand in their country of origin.

Other rules concerning eligibility to stand for election: arrangements for submitting and registering lists

A list is valid if it has the proven support of:

- between 30 000 and 35 000 voters living in the election constituency or another EU Member State;
- at least 10% of the electorate of each region included in the constituency.

²⁷⁶ D'Alimonte R., Fusaro C., *La legislazione elettorale italiana*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008, p. 69.

Italian electoral law does, however, provide for a series of exemptions from these legal provisions governing support for the submission of a list. Political parties represented in a specific parliamentary grouping in at least one of the two chambers of the Italian Parliament are not required to demonstrate that they have the support of a certain number of voters. Parties that stood in the previous European elections and won at least one seat are also exempt from this requirement, as well as those lists representing a grouping of several existing parties, of which at least one meets the above requirements for the submission of lists.

Nominations must be submitted no later than 39 days and no sooner than 40 days before the election. The lists of candidates for each constituency must be submitted to the Clerk's Office of the Court of Appeal housing the Election Committee²⁷⁷. However, the initials (i.e. name) borne by each list must be submitted to the Ministry of the Interior between the 49th and 48th day prior to the elections²⁷⁸. In the case of the European elections on 6 and 7 June 2009, the initials borne by the candidate lists must be registered by 20 April 2009, while the deadline for registering the candidate lists themselves is 29 April 2009. The statement of submission must be signed by the party chairman and party secretary or by a legal representative officially appointed by them on the basis of instructions certified by a notary.

Candidates may stand in several constituencies simultaneously (Article 12(6) of Law No 18/1979 of 24 January 1979). Furthermore, Article 12(9) of the same law stipulates that the lists submitted by the parties or political groups representing the French-speaking minority of the Valle d'Aosta, the German-speaking minority in the province of Bolzano and Slovene speakers in Friuli may be linked with a list put forward in the same constituency by another political party that is fielding candidates in all the other electoral constituencies under the same initials.

Article 3 of Law No 90/2004 lays down specific rules concerning the representation of women and equal opportunities in the drawing-up of lists for the European elections. Within a proportional voting system with large multi-regional constituencies and the possibility of casting several votes, a gender quota is established at national level, i.e. by looking at all the constituency lists drawn up for the same grouping. Neither men nor women should account for more than two-thirds of candidates²⁷⁹. Constituency lists that do not include both male and female candidates are not admissible, while lists that do not comply with the provisions of Article 3 of Law No 90/2004 are not eligible for the reimbursement of election expenses.

Italian electoral law does not provide for the nomination of alternates: the maximum number of candidates on each list corresponds to the number of seats available in the constituency in question. The minimum number of candidates that can appear on a list is three.

Rules on ineligibility and incompatibility (national and European elections)

It should be noted that Italian law does not rule that candidates who already hold a national, regional or local office are ineligible but stipulates that certain posts are incompatible with that of Member of the European Parliament. This has led to the expansion of the widespread practice of placing at the head of the list (i.e. in positions one to three) well-known politicians who attract

²⁷⁷ Article 12 of Law No 18/1979 of 24 January 1979.

²⁷⁸ Article 11 of Law No 18/1979 of 24 January 1979.

²⁷⁹ Pezzini B., *Il riequilibrio di genere nella legislazione elettorale*, in D'Alimonte R., Fusaro C., *La legislazione elettorale italiana*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008, pp. 111-142.

media attention and have a sizeable voter base, but who often already hold parliamentary or government posts at national, regional or local level. It is likely that these candidates will not take up a seat in the European Parliament, in order to avoid choosing between the two roles. This means that the positions at the head of the list are usually occupied by ‘token’ candidates.

Italian law lists a number of offices that are incompatible²⁸⁰ with that of Member of the European Parliament. In certain cases, this is dictated by European rules barring MEPs from other functions at Community level. It is forbidden to occupy a seat in Parliament while serving as:

- a Member of the European Commission;
- a Judge, Advocate-General or Registrar of the Court of Justice or Court of First Instance of the European Communities;
- a member of the Executive Board of the European Central Bank or EIB;
- a Member of the Court of Auditors;
- European Ombudsman;
- a Member of the Economic and Social Committee or Committee of the Regions;
- a member of other bodies or agencies established under the Community Treaties.

Furthermore, at national level, the role of MEP is incompatible with that of national deputy or senator, government member in one of the EU Member States at either national or regional level (it is therefore impossible to occupy a seat in the European Parliament while serving as an *assessore regionale* – regional councillor) and president of a region or province. It is also forbidden to sit in both the European Parliament and one of Italy’s regional parliaments (*Consigli Regionali*) or to serve as an MEP at the same time as holding the office of mayor in a municipality with a population of more than 15 000. The possibilities of combining the role of MEP with another political office are therefore very limited. The only remaining options are to serve simultaneously as an MEP on the one hand and mayor of a small municipality, alderman or municipal or provincial councillor on the other.²⁸¹

Voter registration

Voters with Italian nationality are automatically included on the electoral register of their municipality of residence as soon as they reach majority. Nationals of other EU Member States must register with their municipal authority by 9 March 2009 in order to be able to vote in the European elections. Italian citizens living abroad may register to vote by applying to the relevant Italian consulate by 19 March 2009²⁸².

Handling of and administrative responsibility for election procedures

The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for all duties associated with the appointment of electoral bodies. With the assistance of the regional authorities, the Ministry’s Central Directorate for Election Services oversees all the groundwork for the ballots governed by national law, such as the European, national, regional and communal elections and referendums. Office No II of the Central Directorate for Election Services is specifically responsible for duties related to election preparation.

²⁸⁰ Article 3(5.1) of Law 18/1979 of 24 January 1979.

²⁸¹ Article 2 of Law No 78 of 27 March 2004.

²⁸² Article 3(3) of Decree-Law No 408/1994 and Article 1(1) of Law No 483/1994.

Voting arrangements

The European elections are scheduled to take place on 6 and 7 June 2009 (from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. respectively). Only paper voting slips are available. The sample voting slips for the 2009 European elections have not yet been released by the Ministry of the Interior.

Division of the country into constituencies

Italy is divided into five constituencies made up of several regions. The first is North-West Italy, which covers Piedmont, the Valle d'Aosta, Liguria and Lombardy. The second is North-East Italy, which includes Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli and Emilia-Romagna. The third constituency is Central Italy, formed by Lazio, Umbria, Marche and Tuscany. The fourth, Southern Italy, covers Abruzzi, Molise, Campania, Apulia, Basilicata and Calabria. The fifth constituency, 'Islands' consists of Sardinia and Sicily²⁸³.

Each constituency elects a number of deputies proportional to the number of people in the constituency, which is then corrected by the actual number of voters. The number of European Parliament seats to be filled in each constituency in the 2009 elections is as follows:

Constituency	Candidates
North-West (Piedmont, Valle d'Aosta, Lombardy, Liguria)	19
North-East (Trentino, Veneto, Friuli, Emilia-Romagna)	13
Centre (Lazio, Marche, Tuscany, Umbria)	14
South (Campania, Apulia, Abruzzi, Basilicata, Molise, Calabria)	18
Islands (Sicily, Sardinia)	8

Rules on election campaign funding and the reimbursement of election expenses

The rules on the reimbursement of election expenses are complex and have undergone several alterations over the last decade. Following the adoption of the new electoral law of 20 February 2009, only those parties that obtain at least 4% of the vote nationally, and therefore a seat in the European Parliament, are entitled to have their election expenses refunded. However, under Law No 90/2004, the reimbursement of election expenses may be halved for lists that fail to ensure a gender balance (the least-represented gender must account for one-third of candidates on the list).

Rules concerning media access during the election campaign and use of pre-election polls

The election campaign officially begins 30 days before the election. Media access is tightly regulated: under Law No 28 of 22 February 2000, the 'equal time' principle provides for detailed arrangements concerning participation by Italy's various political forces in televised

²⁸³ Table A, Law No 18/1979 of 24 January 1979.

programmes and the broadcast of political campaign messages on the radio and television. In the last two weeks before the elections, it is strictly prohibited to publish the results of election polls.

As regards the electoral system, i.e. the conversion of votes into seats, we will look at three aspects of the voting arrangements:

The allocation of seats

Italy applies a proportional system for the appointment of its representatives to the European Parliament. The country is divided into five multi-regional constituencies solely for the purposes of fielding candidates. The allocation of seats actually takes place in the context of a single national constituency. The seats are therefore allocated proportionally on the basis of the number of votes each list has obtained nationally, which is calculated within a single national constituency and according to the principles of the highest average and the largest remainder. This means that the Hare method is applied to convert votes into seats²⁸⁴.

Once the seats have been allocated among the lists, deputies are appointed within those lists using an open-list approach. It is possible to vote either for a list or preferentially for one, two or three candidates (depending on the constituency) on the list of one's choice. A vote cast for the list signifies support for the order of candidates decided by the party. A preferential vote means that the voter wishes to change the order in which candidates appear on the list by supporting one or several specific candidates. The candidates' score is therefore equal to the number of preferential votes they receive.

As the votes are counted, seats are allocated on the basis of the total number of votes cast for each national list. The national election result for each list is calculated by dividing the number of votes each list obtains by the number of seats to be allocated nationally or the *quotiente elettorale nazionale* (national electoral quotient: the number of votes cast for all lists divided by the number of seats available). The seats allocated to each list are then distributed by constituency among those candidates that have won the most votes. Owing to the open-list method applied in the European elections, the order of the list only applies once each candidate's individual election score has been taken into account.

Threshold required to obtain a seat

In order to be included in the seat allocation process, the party lists entered in the ballot must win at least 4% of valid votes at national level. This requirement was recently introduced by Law No 10/2009 of 20 February 2009.

Preferential voting

As explained above, the candidate lists for the European elections are open. The number of preferential votes a person may cast varies according to the constituency, but it is between one and three. Voters can therefore cast a maximum of three preferential votes in the first

²⁸⁴ Articles 20 and 21 of Law No 18/1979.

constituency, two in the second, third and fourth, and one in the fifth. Only one preferential vote can be awarded to party lists representing the linguistic minorities, which are linked to other lists put forward in all the constituencies (Article 14 of Law 18/1979).

Finally, it should be noted that, in the debate of the last few months on the reforms to be carried out for the European elections, one of the main issues was whether to introduce closed lists. The PdL and LN groups tabled a preliminary reform bill in the Chamber of Deputies, with the backing of the President of the Council of Ministers, Silvio Berlusconi, providing for closed lists, as was also the case in the 2005 electoral reform applicable to national parliamentary elections. The opposition parties' refusal to adopt an agreement on this issue led the governing majority to abandon this proposal.

The electoral law applicable to the European elections was recently amended. On 20 January 2008 the PdL party tabled a reform bill aimed at bringing legislation governing the European elections into line with that governing the national elections, which was adopted by the centre-right majority in 2005. The bill contained a proposal to alter three essential aspects of existing electoral law: the threshold for the allocation of seats, the number of constituencies and preferential voting. Under the proposal, the threshold for winning a seat was set at 5% of votes cast and the number of constituencies was increased from five to 15. According to the terms of this initial proposal, five deputies within each constituency would be elected regardless of the population of the regions that made up that constituency. The bill also provided for the introduction of closed lists.

The reform was justified by the need to reduce the fragmentation of the European parliamentary parties making up the Italian delegation. As a result of the ultra-proportional system provided for by the previous law, many small parties had won seats in the European Parliament, and the lack of control exerted with regard to the formation of parliamentary groups was astonishing. Finally, in January 2009 an agreement was reached between the PdL and PD regarding the adoption of a new electoral law after the provisions relating to the abolition of preferential voting and the changes to constituencies were withdrawn. The threshold is now 4% to allow better organisation of the European representation of Italian parties.

There was fierce opposition to the reform among the smaller parties, particularly those on the extra-parliamentary left (the Greens, the PRC, the SD and the PdCI) and the MpA (*Movimento per l'Autonomia* – Movement for Autonomy), but also the LN, UDEUR and UdC. The IdV initially opposed the reform but subsequently changed its position to one of support. The PD saw the reform as a means of securing more seats within the European Parliament and, more specifically, 20 deputies, so that it could found its own parliamentary group, thereby avoiding the need to choose between the PSE and ALDE, which would spark internal crises within the different party factions (in particular, between those at the centre, which have closer ties with the parties forming the ALDE Group and those on the left, more strongly associated with the social democrats of the PSE).

Internal party rules on the selection of candidates

In the previous section we examined the official rules on participation in elections, their practical applications, the legal framework governing the voting system, eligibility criteria and arrangements for submitting and registering the lists. It is therefore important now to turn to the mechanisms implicit in these rules and the procedures in place for those seeking election, in

terms of the drawing-up of lists and the nomination of individual candidates. As regards the latter, it is generally the parties that oversee the process of nominating candidates for the European elections.

Almost all Italian parties include in their statutes rules applicable to the drawing-up of lists for the national, regional and European elections. Some parties also lay down rules regarding the compilation of lists for municipal elections (e.g. the PD, PRC and AN). In the case of the European elections, all Italian party statutes, with the exception of the PdCI's statutes, set out the procedure for drawing up lists of candidates for the European elections. The parties dealt with in this report have been chosen on the basis of one main criterion: they won at least 2% of the vote in the most recent elections, the national parliamentary elections held on 13 and 14 April 2008.

This report will therefore look only at the following parties (Table 1): the PdL²⁸⁵, the PD, the LN, UdC, IdV, PdCI, the PRC, SD, the Greens and the LD. However, not all these parties are represented in the national parliament, mainly as a result of the threshold required for a seat in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate (2% nationally for lists of parties forming coalitions for election to the Chamber of Deputies, 4% nationally for lists of parties that have not joined a coalition for election to the Chamber, 3% regionally for lists of parties forming coalitions for election to the Senate and 8% regionally for lists of non-coalition parties standing in elections to the Senate).

²⁸⁵ The PdL party is the product of the very recent merger of the AN and FI (Table 1). On 21 March 2009 the AN held its last national congress, bringing together member delegates, party representatives and national and regional party leaders, which unanimously adopted a motion to dissolve the party and join with FI. On 29 March 2009 the PdL's first constituent assembly was held in Rome. The party is composed of delegates and representatives of the founding parties (the AN and FI and the tiny parties also united under the PdL banner: the NPSI (*Nuovo Partito Socialista Italiano* – New Italian Socialist Party), the DCA (*Democrazia Cristiana per le Autonomie* – Christian Democracy for the Autonomies), PL (*Popolari Liberali* – Liberal Populars), the AS (*Azione Sociale* – Social Action), the PRI (*Partito Repubblicano Italiano* – Italian Republican Party), the RL (*Riformatori Liberali* – Liberal Reformers), the InM (*Italiani nel Mondo* – Italians in the World), the PP (*Partito dei Pensionati* – the Pensioners' Party), the DC (*Democrazia Cristiana* – Christian Democracy), the LD (*Lamberto Dini*), DL (*Destra Libertaria* – the Libertarian Right) and the FCP (*Federazione dei Cristiano Popolari* – the Federation of Christian Populars). The founding parties had already forged an alliance for the 2008 parliamentary elections, but the organisational structures of the two main component parties (FI and the AN) had not yet been officially merged. The unification process was, however, launched on 28 February 2008 with an agreement between the leaders of the two main founding parties, Silvio Berlusconi and Gianfranco Fini, and the AN and FI have formed a single parliamentary grouping in the Chamber of Deputies and Senate since the beginning of the 16th legislature.

Party	Full name	Share of votes in the Chamber of Deputies in 2008	Number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies in 2008
PdL	People of Freedom – <i>Popolo della Libertà</i> (founded on 29 March 2009 following the merger of Forza Italia and the National Alliance, along with a number of smaller parties; it ran as a coalition in the 2008 elections)	37.4%	276
FI	Forward Italy – <i>Forza Italia</i>	-	186
AN	National Alliance – <i>Alleanza Nazionale</i>	-	90
PD	Democratic Party – <i>Partito Democratico</i>	33.2%	211
LN	Northern League – <i>Lega Nord</i>	8.3%	60
UdC	Union of the Centre – <i>Unione di Centro</i>	5.6%	36
IdV	Italy of Values – <i>Italia dei Valori</i>	4.4%	29
SA	The Left – The Rainbow – <i>La Sinistra L'Arcobaleno</i> , a coalition formed by the PdCI, PRC, Greens and SD.	3.8%	0
PdCI	Party of Italian Communists – <i>Partito dei Comunisti Italiani</i>	-	0
PRC	Communist Refoundation Party – <i>Partito della Rifondazione comunista</i>	-	0
Greens	The Greens – <i>I Verdi</i>	-	0
SD	Democratic Left – <i>Sinistra Democratica</i>	-	0
LD	The Right – <i>La Destra</i>	2.4%	0

Table 1: List of Italian parties that won at least 2% of votes in the last parliamentary elections to the Chamber of Deputies (13 to 14 April 2008)

We will begin by looking at the formal provisions set out in these parties' statutes and internal rules as regards the drawing-up of lists for elections in general and the European Parliament in particular. The report will then focus on the practices employed by Italian parties when selecting candidates. Before we begin our analysis of the candidate selection procedures, it should be pointed out that the organisational structures of Italian parties, and of Western European parties in general, are usually based on four main components: members, regional divisions, the middle ranks and the party leadership²⁸⁶.

²⁸⁶M. Duverger, *Les partis politiques*, Paris, A. Colin, 1976, 3rd edition.

A. Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization and Power*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Katz, R.; Mair, P. *Introduction. The Cross-National Study of Party Organizations*. In R. Katz and P. Mair (eds.), *Party Organizations, A Data Handbook*, London, Sage, 1992, pp. 1-21.

R.S. Katz et P. Mair, *The Evolution of Party Organizations in Europe: The Three Faces of Party Organization*, in W. Crotty, *Political Parties in a Changing Age*, American Review of Politics, 14, 1993, pp. 593-617.

Ignazi P.; Ysmal, C. (eds). *The Organization of Political Parties in Southern Europe*. London, Praeger, 1998.

D.-L. Seiler, *Les partis politiques*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2000, 2nd edition, p. 188.

R.S. Katz. *The Internal Life of Parties*, in K.R. Luther and F. Müller-Rommel (eds), *Political Parties in the New Europe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 98-100.

L. Le Duc, R.G. Niemi, P. Norris, *Comparing democracies 2. New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London, Sage, 2002.

S. Scarrow, M. Kittilson. *Political Parties and the Rhetoric and Realities of Democratization*, in Democracy Transformed? Bruce Cain, Russell Dalton, Susan Scarrow (eds.), Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 59-80.

Beyond the differing normative and analytical approaches set out in publications dealing with parties from an organisational perspective²⁸⁷, it is important to note that the main internal party bodies generally involved in the selection of candidates are as follows. The first group is party members, who are usually brought together as an assembly. The second is the party congress, which is formed by member delegates, party office-holders and national and regional leaders. This internal body often acts as the party's parliament. Sometimes, however, the decision-making body is more restricted and is elected by the party congress (as the 'central committee', 'national political committee' or 'national board').

The third type of internal party body is more limited in its membership and generally acts as the party's governing body: the steering committee or party bureau. In the case of Italian parties, this political leadership is often known as the 'national executive' or the 'national board'. It is usually composed of party office-holders (or the chairmen of regional, national and European parliamentary groups) and the party's national leadership, and sometimes includes the leaders of the party's local and regional branches or its policy area sections and associated organisations. Lastly, the party's political bureau, 'restricted bureau' or 'national secretariat', which generally consists of the party's highest-ranking leaders and office-holder delegates at all levels, is a restrictive executive body that assists the leader in the task of the day-to-day and political supervision of the party organisation. The highest-ranking party member holds a monocratic position: that of party chairman or secretary or the leader of the movement²⁸⁸.

Table 2 shows in detail which of the above bodies is responsible for drawing up and adopting the lists for the European elections for each of the Italian parties discussed in this report. The internal party rules on candidate selection are laid down in the parties' statutes and internal rules.

O. Massari. *I partiti politici nelle democrazie contemporanee*, Bari, Laterza, 2004.

Bardi L. (ed). *Partiti e sistemi di partito*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2006.

Morlino L., Tarchi M. *Partiti e caso Italiano*. Bologna, Il Mulino, 2006.

Bardi L., Ignazi P., Massari O. (eds). *I Partiti Italiani. Iscritti, dirigenti, eletti*. Milan, Università Bocconi, 2007.

Bosco A., Morlino L. (eds). *Party Change in Southern Europe*, London, Routledge, 2007.

²⁸⁷ For an overview of publications in this field, see: S. Bartolini; S. Hug, D. Caramani. *Parties and Party Systems: a Bibliographic Guide to the Literature on Parties and Party Systems in Europe since 1945*. London, Sage, 1998.

²⁸⁸ Bardi L., Ignazi P., Massari O. (eds). *I Partiti Italiani. Iscritti, dirigenti, eletti*. Milan, Università Bocconi, 2007, pp. 284-285.

Party	Rules
PdL ²⁸⁹	The party statutes have yet to be adopted.
FI	Article 43 of the statutes adopted in May 2004 stipulates that lists for the European elections should be drawn up by the restricted national bureau (the <i>Comitato di Presidenza</i> , which is composed of national and regional leaders and 12 member delegates, of which six are elected by the party congress and six directly appointed by the party leader) following discussions with the heads of the regional party branches (<i>Coordinatori Regionali</i>).
AN	According to the statutes adopted in December 2006 (Article 30(2)), the party's national steering committee (<i>Direzione Nazionale</i>) is responsible for drawing up the lists for the European elections. The national steering committee has 100 members, which include member delegates (appointed by the assembly of party members, the <i>Assemblea Nazionale</i>), party office-holders and party leaders.
PD	The election rules for the 2009 European elections were adopted by the national steering committee on 23 March 2009 ²⁹⁰ . According to these rules, the restricted executive bureau of the PD (<i>Segreteria Nazionale</i>), working alongside the heads of the regional party branches (<i>Segretari Regionali</i>), proposes the heads of list for the five multi-regional constituencies. In addition, the regional steering committees (<i>Direzioni Regionali</i>) propose candidates that are representative of the region after consulting the provincial branches (Article 5 of the rules on the European elections). These lists must then be approved by the restricted executive bureau and ratified by the national steering committee (<i>Direzione Nazionale</i> , Article 6 of the rules).
LN	Article 13(2) of the statutes stipulates that the party's national board (the <i>Consiglio Federale</i> , a decision-making body, composed of member delegates, party office-holders and heads of regional branches, which are known as <i>Sezioni Nazionali</i> , because each one represents a 'nation', i.e. a different ethnic or linguistic community) must ratify the lists of candidates proposed by each voting committee of the regional party branches (<i>Consigli Nazionali</i>). After consulting the heads of the regional branches (<i>Segretari Nazionali</i>), the party's national board approves the lists drawn up regionally, but also decides on the appointment of heads of list for each constituency.
UdC	Article 55 of the statutes specifies that the party leader (political secretary) is responsible for approving the candidates standing in all elections.
IdV	The party chairman is responsible for 'preparing' the lists put forward in each constituency for national and European elections, while the party's restricted bureau (<i>Ufficio di Presidenza</i>) must approve them (Articles 9 and 10 of the statutes amended on 9 January 2009)
PdCI	Article 29 of the statutes states merely that the lists must be drawn up so as to ensure the widest possible participation of the party's local sections. The candidates are approved by the party's governing bodies at national and regional level by means of a majority vote.
PRC	The lists of candidates are drawn up by the provincial steering committees (<i>federali</i>) once they have consulted the regional steering committees (<i>Comitati politici regionali</i>) and the national steering committee (<i>Comitato politico nazionale</i>). The proposed lists must then be approved by the party's restricted bureau (<i>Direzione Nazionale</i> , Article 70 of the party statutes).
The	According to Article 14 of the statutes, the criteria for selecting candidates are

²⁸⁹ As the party was founded only on 29 March, the party's statutes and internal rules are still being drawn up. For this reason, the procedures laid down in the statutes of the two main founding parties of the PdL, FI and the AN, are examined here.

²⁹⁰ The '*Regolamento quadro per la selezione delle candidature alle cariche istituzionali*', adopted by the steering committee on 17 July 2008, and the '*Regolamento per le elezioni europee*', adopted on 23 March 2009.

Greens	established for each election by the party's national board (<i>Consiglio federale nazionale</i> , a decision-making body composed of 100 members, half of whom are elected by party members as a whole and half by the regional branches). Article 16 of the statutes specifies merely that the nominations for candidates should be approved at the 'different territorial levels', but does not lay down any further rules for the ratification of lists.
SD	The candidates are approved by the national steering committee (<i>Direzione Nazionale</i>), which is composed of 70 members elected by the party's national board (restricted decision-making body elected by the party congress) and, in this case, the heads of the party's regional branches (<i>Coordinatori Regionali</i>). The lists of candidates are submitted to the steering committee, which approves them by a qualified majority of two-thirds of its members (Article 33 of the statutes), and are drawn up on the basis of a structured dialogue between party members (Article 12(2) of the statutes adopted on 20 July 2008), the national steering committee and the party's local divisions.
LD	Article 14 of the statutes stipulates that the party leader (<i>Segretario Nazionale</i>), together with the chairman of the national party board (a decision-making body composed of members of the national steering committee, the <i>Esecutivo Nazionale</i> , and 400 members elected by the party congress), is responsible for drawing up the lists for the European elections.

Table 2: Rules laid down in Italian party statutes for the selection of candidates

In order to examine the candidate selection procedures employed by Italian parties for the European elections in line with the formal provisions set out in their statutes and internal rules, we will look at the main points of analysis set out in works on internal party structures, in particular those dealing with the selection of candidates by political parties²⁹¹. The first aspect traditionally considered in works on the selection of party candidates is the 'selectorate', i.e. the party body responsible for drawing up the lists for the European elections (the leadership, the restricted bureau, the steering committee or the party assembly). The second aspect is the degree to which the selection procedures are decentralised. In this case, the studies focus on the party level at which the European election lists are compiled²⁹².

²⁹¹Hazan R. *Candidate selection*, in L. Le Duc, R. Niemi and P. Norris, Comparing democracies 2. New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting. London, Sage, 2002, pp. 108-126.

Hazan R., Rahat G. *Candidate Selection*, in Richard Katz and William Crotty (eds), Handbook of Party Politics, London, Sage, 2006, pp. 109-121.

Rahat G., Hazan, R. *Candidate Selection Methods: An Analytical Framework*, Party Politics, vol. 7, no. 3, 2001, pp. 297-322.

Rahat G. *Which Candidate Selection Method is the Most Democratic?*, Government and Opposition, vol.44, no 1, 2009, pp. 68-90.

²⁹² It should be noted that there are few works dealing with the methods adopted by Italian parties for the selection of candidates. Moreover, detailed and pertinent references to these methods are very rare: the main ones are Floridia, A. 'Scendere in campo': l'accesso alla competizione elettorale tra barriere formali e incentivi politici, in D'Alimonte R., Fusaro C., *La legislazione elettorale italiana*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008, pp. 69-111.

Di Virgilio, A., *Nuovo sistema elettorale e strategie di competizione: quanto è cambiata l'offerta politica?* in D'Alimonte R. and Chiaramonte A., *Proporzionale ma non solo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2007, pp. 191-243.

For more general information about parliamentary elections and the Italian political class as represented in the European Parliament, see: Pasquinucci D., Verzichelli L., *Elezioni europee e classe politica sovranazionale 1979-2004*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2004.

Cavatorta S., Verzichelli L., *Italy and the Strategy of Political Appointment*, in Fabbrini S., Piattoni S. , Italy in the European Union, Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield, 2007, pp. 209-233.

Verzichelli L., Edinger M., *A Critical Juncture? The 2004 European elections and the making of a supranational elite*, Journal of Legislative Studies, vol. 11, 2005, pp. 254-274.

Gilbert M., *Suonare lo spartito sbagliato? L'Italia e l'Unione europea nel 2004*, in Guarneri C. and Newell J. , *Politica in Italia. I fatti dell'anno e le interpretazioni. Edizione 2005*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2005, pp. 120-140.

Looking at the first aspect, the situation regarding the body responsible for adopting or drawing up the lists of candidates for the European elections is more or less the same for all Italian parties. This task of adopting the lists of candidates for election to the European Parliament lies with the national executive bodies (which can be restricted, like the party bureaus, or more inclusive in their make-up, such as the steering committees).

The rather restricted nature of the ‘selectorate’ responsible for choosing European election candidates, which is true of the vast majority of Italian parties, is very likely linked to the extremely limited role party members play in the party hierarchy²⁹³. No Italian party directly involves its members in the candidate selection procedure for the European elections, for instance, by allowing members to vote on the lists decided by a central or regional body within an assembly, in a ballot or at the party congress.

In fact, members of most Italian parties are not empowered to elect the party chairman, with some rare exceptions, such as the PD and the Greens, or to select candidates to stand in the national or local (regional, provincial or communal) elections. Traditionally, it has been organising committees at different territorial levels that have drawn up the lists, even if the degree to which the selection procedures are decentralised varies noticeably from one party to another²⁹⁴. Very often, the members’ assembly constitutes a separate entity and has fewer powers than the party congress or, aside from party office-holders and leaders, is composed only of selected member delegates from each constituency, generally on the basis of the votes garnered in that constituency in the most recent elections²⁹⁵. As a rule, ordinary members are not authorised to convene a party congress or to play a direct role in selecting the delegates that sit on the party’s national executive bodies.

Within these organisational structures, which vary as to how hierarchical or decentralised they are, depending on the organisational model adopted by the party in question, it is not surprising to find that, in the vast majority of cases, it is a national executive body that is in charge of drawing up the lists for the European elections or giving final approval to the lists proposed by other bodies. However the lists are drawn up, the power of veto with regard to the selection of European Parliament candidates lies, in almost all the parties dealt with here, with an executive body at national level: the restricted national bureau (the *Comitato* or *Ufficio di Presidenza*) in the case of FI and the IdV, and the national steering committee (*Direzione Nazionale*) within the AN, PD, SD and PRC.

The only party in which the task of approving the lists belongs to a broader national decision-making body is the LN: its *Consiglio Federale*, composed of member delegates, party office-holders and the heads of regional branches, endorses the candidates for the European elections.

²⁹³ Bardi L., Ignazi P., Massari O. (eds). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 269-281.

Sandri G. , Pauwels, T. , *The role of party members in Belgian and Italian parties: a cross-national analysis*, Dans Deschouwer K., van Haute E., *Party membership in Europe – exploration into the anthills of party politics*, Editions de l’ Université de Bruxelles, 2009 (soon to be published).

²⁹⁴ Ignazi, P., *Il puzzle dei partiti: più forti e più aperti ma meno attratti e meno legittimi*, Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica, 2004, No 3, pp. 325-346.

Ignazi, P., *Gli iscritti ad Alleanza Nazionale: attivi ma frustrati*, Polis, 2006, vol. 20, No 1, pp. 31-58.
Mulé R. , *Dentro i DS*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2007.

Baccetti C., *I Post-Democristiani*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008.

Poli E., *Forza Italia. Strutture, leadership e radicamento territoriale*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2001.

²⁹⁵ Bardi L., Ignazi P., Massari O. (eds). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 274-275.

However, the procedures leading up to this formal adoption of candidate lists vary noticeably, in particular as regards the degree of decentralisation in drawing up the lists. With regard to this second aspect which is analysed in works on the subject, the variation between the different Italian parties is larger. The parties can therefore be divided into three groups according to the decentralisation of the decision-making process resulting in the compilation of lists for the European elections.

Parties in which the selection of candidates is relatively decentralised. The list is drawn up in two stages: the regional branches either propose the lists or are involved in compiling them and the party's central authorities then approve the candidates put forward by the regional branches. This category includes the PD, LN, SD and PRC.

In the first case, the draft lists are submitted by regional steering committees (*Direzioni Regionali*) and must then be approved by the national steering committee (*Direzione Nazionale*). In the case of the PRC, too, it is regional and provincial executive bodies (*Comitati politici regionali e provinciali*) that put forward lists for approval by the *Direzione Nazionale*. Meanwhile, the LN's statutes stipulate that the task of drawing up 'model lists' falls to the decision-making bodies of the regional branches (*Consigli Nazionali*), while responsibility for approving these draft lists lies with the national decision-making body, the *Consiglio Federale*. Within the *Sinistra Democratica*, the candidates proposed by the party's regional branches are endorsed by the national steering committee (*Direzione Nazionale*), which is extended to the heads of the regional branches (*Coordinatori Regionali*).

With regard to FI, the regional sections are consulted only in the drawing-up of the lists, although the party statutes clearly provide for a two-stage selection procedure (Article 43 of the statutes).

In two of the parties at issue here, the PdCI and the Greens, the procedure for selecting candidates to stand in the European elections also takes place in two separate stages, but the allocation of tasks is the other way round: the parties' regional branches ratify the lists proposed nationally (Article 29 of the PdCI statutes and Article 16 of the Greens' statutes). A draft list is produced by a national party body, the *Consiglio federale nazionale* in the Greens' case, and must then be approved by the party's regional branches.

Parties in which the selection of candidates is fairly centralised, with the task remaining the responsibility of a central party authority. This arrangement is provided for only in the AN statutes, according to which the party's national steering committee (*Direzione Nazionale*), which is composed of member delegates, party office-holders (chairmen of regional, national and European parliamentary groupings) and the party leadership (the chairman, the chairman of the party assembly, the chairman of the youth association, the heads of the party's guarantee and financial audit authorities, the heads of the organisational and administrative departments and the heads of regional branches), is responsible for drawing up lists for the European elections.

Parties in which power to select candidates lies with the party's national leader. The procedure for selecting candidates for the European elections is, in this case, not only the most centralised but also involves the smallest electorate. The party's regional bodies, whether executive or consultative bodies or assemblies, are not involved at any stage of the decision-making process for the selection of European Parliament candidates. Moreover, no intermediary party body at national level has a say either. The decision remains firmly in the hands of the party leader.

In the UdC's case, the party leader – the political secretary – is in charge of drawing up the lists. Article 14 of the LD statutes states simply that the party leader, the *Segretario Nazionale*, is responsible for drawing up lists for the European elections. Meanwhile, although the IdV statutes entrust the party chairman with the task of 'preparing' the lists put forward for each constituency in the national and European elections, they also stipulate that the party's restricted national bureau (the *Ufficio di Presidenza*, of which the party chairman is a member and has the power of veto) must approve the lists.

It is important to add at this juncture that Article 1 of the PD's statutes specifies that the party must hand responsibility for the selection of candidates for institutional posts over to all members of the party's electorate. In general, this selection should take place by means of 'primary' elections that are open not only to party members (Article 2(5)(b)) but also to party supporters (Article 2(4)(b)).

However, according to Article 18(4) and (9), the holding of primary elections is compulsory only for the selection of candidates to stand in regional, provincial and communal elections. With regard to other elections, and the European elections in particular, candidates are selected either through primaries or by 'other means of democratic consultation'. The method of selecting European Parliament candidates is chosen on the basis of electoral rules specific to each type of election. These rules are drawn up by the national steering committee (*Direzione Nazionale*) pursuant to the framework rules provided for under Article 18(3) of the statutes adopted in June 2008.

Internal party practices with regard to candidate selection

We will now look at the practices actually employed by the political parties when it comes to drawing up lists for the European elections. It is in fact essential to examine how the rules laid down in party statutes are applied in practice with regard to candidate selection if we are to understand the workings and implications of these mechanisms. It is also important to observe that all the parties dealt with in this report have adopted more or less detailed rules for the drawing-up of lists (the UdC and PdCI statutes in particular are rather vague with regard to the selection of candidates for the European elections). This fact confirms the central role candidate selection plays within the internal power structures of parties today: according to several authors, whoever controls these processes plays a pivotal role within the party organisation²⁹⁶.

If we look closely at the actual practices employed by Italian parties when drawing up lists for the European elections, two main aspects stand out. First of all, it is important to stress the central, albeit often informal, role played by party leaders. Within this organisational system, which serves as a 'model' for almost all Italian parties, with members virtually excluded from the candidate selection process, the party leader now plays a dominant role. In many cases, not only does the party chairman hold an informal veto, but the statutes grant him or her the task of drawing up the lists or of approving the lists proposed by the party's local or national executive bodies. This is the case for the IdV, LD and UdC statutes.

²⁹⁶ Gallagher M., Marsh M. (eds), *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective: The Secret Garden of Politics*, London, Sage, 1988; Hazan R., *Candidate selection*, in Le Duc, Niemi and Norris, *Comparing democracies 2. New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*, London, Sage, 2002, pp. 108-126.

In many Italian parties, there is a clear tendency for internal decision-making processes to lie increasingly with party leaders. Within the IdV, for example, the statutes of which were noticeably altered in January 2009 (following amendments in 2004 to the 1998 statute), it is now the job of the party bureau (a restricted body consisting of the leader himself/herself, the spokesperson and the group leaders within the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies²⁹⁷) to approve the lists proposed by the leader. Under the 2004 statutes, however, it was a broader internal party authority, the national steering committee (the *Esecutivo nazionale*, an executive body composed of party office-holders and leaders, including the heads of regional branches and associated organisations²⁹⁸) that was responsible both for compiling and approving the lists.

However, the party leader also plays a key role in choosing candidates to stand in the European elections within several parties whose statutes do not confer any particular authority on him or her, such as the PdL, the Greens, the PRC and the PD. Furthermore, in almost all the parties considered here, the party bureau plays a highly important part in drawing up the lists for the European elections. The influence of the party oligarchies in determining the lists grows with each election: during the candidate selection procedures, the party chairman is assisted by leading party figures, such as the heads of group within the Chamber of Deputies and Senate, government members or the heads of regional branches that are particularly powerful in terms of votes.

The drawing-up of lists is therefore controlled by a governing oligarchy that is not officially recognised by the statutes²⁹⁹. Comparative literature on this subject indicates in fact that proportional systems favour greater party control over parliamentary selection, particularly where candidate selection is directly overseen by the party elite³⁰⁰. It is clear, too, that the internal structure of Italian parties, which is often visibly hierarchical, has a sizeable impact on the choice of procedure for selecting candidates for the European elections³⁰¹.

In addition, the smaller, non-parliamentary parties are subsequently encouraged to adopt candidate selection methods that are more centralised and focused mainly on the party elite, in order to render more effective the electoral strategies established in the aim of exceeding the threshold of 4% of the national vote. These parties (the PdCI, PRC, LD, DS etc.) usually adopt a vertical hierarchical structure. In particular, the highly hierarchical nature of Italy's far-right parties³⁰² certainly contributes to the centralisation of the candidate selection procedures.

It is also important to highlight a second tendency in internal party practices for the selection of candidates for the European elections, which appears to contradict the aforementioned dominant role of the centralised party oligarchies. This is informal 'mediation' between the local and national party leadership as regards the drawing-up of election lists. Even though party leaders³⁰³ generally play a major formal or informal role in the drawing-up of lists, examination

²⁹⁷ Article 10 of the IdV statutes adopted by the party bureau (*Ufficio di Presidenza*) on 9 January 2009.

²⁹⁸ Article 9 of the IdV statutes adopted by the party bureau (*Ufficio di Presidenza*) on 9 January 2009.

²⁹⁹ Tronconi F., Verzichelli L. , *Il ceto parlamentare alla prova della nuova riforma elettorale*, in D'Alimonte R. and Chiaramonte A., *Proporzionale ma non solo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2007, p. 336.

³⁰⁰ Hazan R., Rahat G. *Candidate Selection*, in Richard Katz and William Crotty (eds), *Handbook of Party Politics*, London, Sage, 2006, pp. 109-121.

³⁰¹ Ignazi, P., *Il puzzle dei partiti: più forti e più aperti ma meno attraenti e meno legittimi*, Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica, 2004, No 3, pp. 325-346.

³⁰² Sandri G. , Pauwels, T. , *The role of party members in Belgian and Italian parties: a cross-national analysis*, Dans Deschouwer K., van Haute E., *Party membership in Europe – exploration into the anthills of party politics*, Editions de l' Université de Bruxelles, 2009 (soon to be published).

³⁰³ In Italy, the party leader is generally known as the *Segretario Nazionale* or *Segretario Politico*.

of internal party practices reveals that the party's regional branches often play an advisory role that is not mentioned in the statutes.

In the UdC, for example, the party's regional sections are involved, in practice at least, in the candidate selection procedures for the European elections. These local divisions take part in the negotiations on the composition of the lists: the regional steering committees may propose individual candidates for discussion within the party's central authorities. The national steering committee (*Segreteria Nazionale*) compiles these proposals, which are then submitted to the *Segretario Nazionale* (the party leader) for approval. In the case of the IdV, too, the regional branches may informally propose individual candidates during the negotiations on drawing up the lists, although the final decision rests with the party leader.

The involvement of the regional branches in the drawing-up of lists, even informally and in an advisory capacity, is necessary as a result of the type of proportional voting system adopted in 1979, which allows voters to cast between one and three preferential votes depending on the constituency. This requires parties to take account of the local electoral bases for each person that wishes to stand for election and to assess potential candidates' ties with the local constituency more carefully in their final decision than is the case for the national elections, for which the lists are closed (Law No 270/2005). In the latter case, the practice of 'parachuting' candidates into regions other than the one in which they work and reside is very frequent³⁰⁴, in particular as a result of the possibility of standing for election in several constituencies simultaneously.

Nevertheless, the regional factor in the selection of candidates for the European elections should not be overestimated, as the necessarily large area covered by the five constituencies and the way in which the country is divided up clearly restricts the ability to have ties with Italy's 20 political and administrative regions, around which the political parties' regional branches have traditionally been structured. As a result of the multi-regional constituencies on which the voting system for the European elections is based, it has proven impossible for Italian parties to decentralise completely the candidate selection process. It is therefore essential to balance the interests of the different regional branches involved in the drawing-up of lists for each multi-regional constituency, which requires the national party leadership to play a significant role as mediator.

In this respect, the two trends to emerge from examination of internal party practices as regards candidate selection, namely a certain 'presidentialisation' of procedures and, at the same time, considerable mediation between the central and local authorities of several parties, are two sides of the same coin. These tendencies are part, more generally, of the gradual 'feudalisation' of local party structures and the adoption of a 'franchising' system within Italian parties, as a result of which ultimate decision-making power is restored to party bureaus and leaders, while the lists are drawn up on the basis of a long and complex process of reconciling local and national leaders' demands and those of prominent figures with a large electoral base at local level³⁰⁵.

It should also be noted that ideology plays a decisive role as regards gender representation on the European election lists. Only the left-wing and centre-left parties (the PD, PRC, PdCI and the Greens) are governed by specific rules (quotas) concerning the number of women included on the lists. Although Italian electoral law clearly makes the application of quotas a prerequisite for

³⁰⁴ Tronconi F., Verzichelli L., *Il ceto parlamentare alla prova della nuova riforma elettorale*, in D'Alimonte R. and Chiaramonte A., *Proporzionale ma non solo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2007, pp. 335-367.

³⁰⁵ D'Alimonte R., Fusaro C., *La legislazione elettorale italiana*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008, pp. 90-91.

the submission of lists (Article 3 of Law No 90/2004) and the reimbursement of election expenses, many parties have yet to incorporate specific rules in their statutes. In spite of the fact that proportional voting systems typically lead to a larger presence of women in the assemblies thus elected³⁰⁶, this means that there tend to be few women among the Italian delegation within the European Parliament: only 19% of Italian MEPs are women, compared with 30% within Parliament as a whole³⁰⁷.

Furthermore, analysis of internal party practices for drawing up lists for the 2009 elections reveals an accumulation of parties within the election coalitions, which ultimately has a serious impact on candidate selection procedures. It has become almost obligatory for small left-wing parties in Italy to run under the same election banner following the reform adopted on 20 February 2009. In order to benefit from the reimbursement of election expenses, parties need to win at least one seat in the European Parliament and must therefore obtain more than 4% of the national vote (Article 2 of Law No 157 of 3 June 1999 and Article 1 of Law No 10 of 20 February 2009).

The PdCI and PRC recently announced (on 14 March 2009) their agreement to draw up joint lists as part of a coalition formed for the 2009 European elections. A second coalition of Italian far-left parties was also established on 14 March. The coalition, which goes by the name of *Sinistra e libertà* (Left and Freedom), consists of the Greens, the SD, the rebels of Nichi Vendola's '*Movimento per la Sinistra*' (Movement for the list), which emerged following an internal split within the PRC, and members of the tiny *Partito Socialista*, led by Riccardo Nencini. The smaller parties on the right, such as the LD, which will present joint lists with the far-right grouping *Fiamma Tricolore*, have also chosen to form coalitions so as to increase their chances of reaching the 4% threshold for representation at European level and, most importantly, of qualifying for the reimbursement of election expenses, which constitutes the main source of funding for Italian parties³⁰⁸.

As regards the election coalition of the PRC and PdCI, the parties each appointed a delegation to a joint working group (three members nominated by both the PdCI and the PRC chairmen from among the leadership of their respective parties) responsible for drawing up joint lists for the five constituencies. This task should be completed by the end of March. The national steering committees of the two parties (the PRC's *Comitato Politico Nazionale* and the PdCI's *Comitato Centrale*) must approve the lists drawn up by the joint working group (the two committees both met on 28 March 2009). According to the statements made to the Italian press (e.g. in *La Repubblica*, 19 March 2009, p. 9) by members of the restricted bureau of the PRC, candidates from the parties will not be chosen on a strictly proportional basis.

³⁰⁶ Norris P., *Legislative recruitment*, Dans Le Duc L., Niemi R.G., Norris P., *Comparing Democracies : Elections and Voting in Global Perspective*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, 1996, pp. 285-322.

Norris P., *Passages to Power: Legislative recruitment in Advanced Democracies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

³⁰⁷ Verzichelli L., Edinger M., *A Critical Juncture? The 2004 European elections and the making of a supranational elite*, Journal of Legislative Studies, vol. 11, 2005, pp. 254-274.

Pezzini B; *Op. Cit.*, pp. 112-113.

³⁰⁸ Conti N., Cotta M. and Tronconi F., *La fin de la "partitocratie" italienne: une ouverture de l'espace de la compétition politique?*, in Aucante Y., Dézé A. (eds.), *Les transformations des systèmes de partis dans les démocraties occidentales. La théorie du parti-cartel en question*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2008, pp. 195-218.

Pacini, M., *Finanziamento ai partiti: chi ottiene quanto, come e perché*, Il Mulino, 2002, No 6, pp. 1112-1121.

In the case of *Sinistra e libertà*, the candidate selection method adopted by the coalition is not yet clear, but press statements made by the leaders of the founding parties (*L'Espresso*, 19 March 2009, p. 57) indicate that the procedure will be as follows: two-thirds of candidates on the joint lists will be selected by the governing bodies of the four parties and will be subject to a vote among the respective party assemblies on 19 April 2009. The remaining third will be directly chosen by the parties' restricted bureaus, in order to include 'external candidates' in the form of public figures, as well as outgoing MEPs. The *Sinistra e libertà* coalition also represents an interesting exception as regards the tendency in many Italian parties for the 'presidentialisation' of candidate selection procedures. This coalition is the only political grouping for which the lists are drawn up by the parties' executive bodies but then approved by the assemblies of the four parties that form part of the coalition.

Given that the PdL was founded only on 29 March, the party statutes and internal rules are still being drawn up. Based on interviews conducted in March 2009 with several *Forza Italia* officials, the method for selecting candidates for the upcoming European elections has yet to be established. It seems that the party's national steering committee, the *Direzione Nazionale*, will be responsible for compiling the lists for the European elections (interviews carried out between 17 and 26 March 2009). However, this body has not yet been elected and the negotiations on the candidate lists are taking place within the new party on a fully informal basis.

It is clear that the charismatic party leader, Silvio Berlusconi, will play a key role in the selection process, in particular during this organisational transition period. It is quite likely that, at this time, the procedures in use will be provisional and will subsequently be amended and laid down in the statutes adopted by the party's constituent assembly.

Finally, the candidate lists for the European elections on 7 June 2009 are still unknown. They will be published only in April. However, most heads of list have already been officially announced by the parties. It should be stressed in this regard that, among the 78 MEPs elected in 2004, 40 resigned their seat mid-term. This turnover is unequalled in any other EU Member State. It will therefore be very interesting to look in detail at the candidate profiles, in particular those candidates heading lists, once these are made known in April.

If we examine those figures tipped by the media to be among the 40 heads of list for the five constituencies, it is easy to see that these are, for the most part, likely to be regional officials or members of the parties' national leadership. Outgoing MEPs, government members and public figures (cultural figures, scientists and sports personalities) will probably be proposed as heads of list in many cases for the 2009 European elections. Many national deputies and senators are also well placed to run in the June 2009 elections, even if it means that they will have to give up either their current position or their seat in the European Parliament if they are elected.

This gives us a fairly clear picture of the Italian politicians that will be sent to Strasbourg and Brussels: the European Parliament is often considered a 'fallback' destination for the party faithful or national or regional government malcontents. Furthermore, the fact that there are so many external candidates heading the election lists is a clear indication of the growing personalisation and mediatisation of the election campaign. As for the astonishing choice of Prime Minister Berlusconi to stand as candidate in several constituencies, it is revealing of the campaign strategies adopted by the PdL and confirms the party as a vehicle for its leader.

Party	Head of list and position currently held				
	CONST. 1 (North-West)	CONST. 2 (North-East)	CONST. 3 (Centre)	CONST. 4 (South)	CONST. 5 (Islands)
PdL	<i>Ignazio La Russa</i> , Defence Minister	<i>Silvio Berlusconi</i> , Prime Minister	<i>Silvio Berlusconi</i> , Prime Minister	<i>Silvio Berlusconi</i> , Prime Minister	<i>Silvio Berlusconi</i> , Prime Minister
PD	<i>Sergio Cofferati</i> , Mayor of Bologna	<i>Vittorio Prodi</i> , MEP	<i>Goffredo Bettini</i> , party leader	<i>Sergio D'Antoni</i> , trade union leader	<i>Enzo Bianco</i> , Senator
LN	<i>Mario Borghezio</i> , MEP	to be announced	tba	tba	tba
UdC	<i>Magdi Allam</i> , party leader ³⁰⁹	tba	<i>Gianni Rivera</i> , MEP and former footballer	<i>Luciano Ciocchetti</i> , party leader	tba
IdV	tba	tba	tba	tba	tba
PdCI + PRC	tba	tba	tba	tba	tba
SL (Sinistra e libertà - Left and Freedom: Greens + SD+PSI+ MpS)	tba	tba	tba	tba	tba
LD	<i>Francesco Storace</i> , party leader	<i>Francesco Storace</i> , party leader	<i>Francesco Storace</i> , party leader	<i>Teodoro Buontempo</i> , national deputy	<i>Sebastiano Musumeci</i> , MEP

Table 3: Heads of list for the 2009 European elections (provisional list).

³⁰⁹ Magdi Cristiano Allam is also chairman of the party *Protagonisti per l'Europa Cristiana* (Protagonists for a Christian Europe), which is running in the European elections in coalition with the UdC.

CYPRUS

Introduction

Context of the report

Between 4th and 7th June 2009, elections to the European Parliament will be held in the 27 member states of the EU.³¹⁰ In Cyprus, the elections will take place on 7th June. As a member of the EU since 1st May 2004, Cyprus will hold the second European elections in its history (after the June 2004 elections). Out of the 736 MEPs, Cyprus holds six seats, and thus the national political parties will compete for these. The main political struggle will be between the two largest parties in the country, namely AKEL and DISI, as both want to win the stake of receiving the most votes.

It is almost generally accepted that more or less the seats are already pre-determined (in terms of numbers, not candidates), by judging from the percentages of supporters that each party attracts. Nonetheless, owing to a number of factors, candidate selection is deemed of crucial importance. These factors have to do primarily with the estimate that turnout levels will presumably be at relatively lower levels than those of the 2004 European elections, and this will be exacerbated by the Holy Spirit Holiday that precedes the Election Day.³¹¹ As a result, apart from some official candidate selection procedures that some parties have, a number of other criteria will be considered and informal processes will be practiced, as a way of attracting voters that might otherwise have chosen to abstain. In this context, the possible impact of European political parties and political groups in the European Parliament on the selection procedure is also evaluated in this report.

Methodology

This study rests entirely on a qualitative methodology, which draws on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources used consisted of internal laws and regulations. The relevant party constitutions/charters were studied, and the provisions relating to candidate selection procedures were examined. Moreover, the relevant laws and regulations of the Republic of Cyprus on European elections, including pertinent harmonised EC directives, were also scrutinised for the purposes of this study.

As far as the secondary sources are concerned, these comprised interviews with senior party officials. Specifically, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the spokesman of AKEL, Mr Andros Kyprianou, the Vice-President of DISI, Mr Ionas Nicolaou, the parliamentary representative of DIKO, Mr Andreas Angelides, the spokesman of EDEK, Mr Dimitris Papadakis, the Vice-President of the European Party, Mr Nikos Koutsou, and the Secretary General of the Green Party, Mr Yiorgos Perdikis. In addition, a number of other party officials were contacted who agreed to provide information on the condition of anonymity.

Both the formal interview proceedings and the more informal communications, as well as the internal laws and regulations obtained, were used to determine the key variables of this enquiry.

³¹⁰ The exact Election Day varies between some of the EU member states, as it is made consistent with local custom.

³¹¹ As a result of the Holy Spirit Holiday, many people/voters, may be out of their towns on a long weekend vacation, and this may result in a lower turnout in the elections.

It ought to be pointed out that emphasis, in the length of the analysis, was given relative to the electoral strength of each party.

Through this qualitative methodology the main issues pertaining to this selection process are identified and, thereafter, analysed and discussed. In relation to this, three main questions are scrutinised and explored: the formal (and informal) procedure(s) for candidate selection within each political party; the way and extent to which each national political party perceives and evaluates the role of its corresponding European party; and the explicit aim(s) and objective(s) of each political party from these elections.

General historical background on recent political developments in Cyprus

The Republic of Cyprus was established as an independent and sovereign state on 16th August 1960, when its Constitution came into force and British sovereignty over Cyprus, as a crown colony, ceased. Cyprus is a unitary state with a central government comprised of the two communities of the island, the Greek and the Turkish. In 1963 there was a constitutional breakdown; Turkish Cypriots vacated their offices in the government and there followed an outbreak of violence in the island. A United Nations Peacekeeping Force was stationed to the island in 1964 and has remained there since. In 1974, the Republic of Turkey, one of the guarantor powers of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus, invaded the country with its armed forces and occupied the northern part of the island. As a result of the occupation the Greeks and other Christians of the region were displaced to the southern part of the island, while the Turks of the southern part of the island were forced to move to the north. In 1983, the Turkish - occupied area declared itself the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus', but that entity is only recognised by Turkey, of which it was held by the European Court of Human Rights, to be "*a subordinate local administration*".³¹² Thus, the current Government of Cyprus remains the only *de jure* recognised government in the EU.

The Turkish occupation in Cyprus continues to the present day and therefore the Republic of Cyprus is prevented from exercising its powers over the occupied territory. Proposals for the solution of the "*Cyprus Problem*" have until now failed.³¹³ Cyprus became a member of the European Union on 1 May 2004, but the application of the *acquis* in the occupied areas was suspended.³¹⁴ As a result of the "*Cyprus Problem*", a significant number of constitutional provisions, which refer to the Turkish Cypriot community, have not been in force for over forty years, even though they are considered to be fundamental and thus not subject to modification. A "*doctrine of necessity*" has been accepted by the Supreme Court of Cyprus, so that the House of Representatives may enact laws, even contrary to those provisions of the Constitution which are temporarily not in force because of the "*Cyprus Problem*".³¹⁵ As a result of the Cyprus Problem, Turkish Cypriots do not yet participate fully in the political life of the island and this unavoidably affects their participation in the elections for the European Parliament.

³¹² *Loizidou v. Turkey*, Judgments of 23 March 1995 and 18 December 1998, reaffirmed in *Cyprus v. Turkey*, Judgment of 10 May 2001. Also see C-432/92, *R v. Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, ex p. S. P. Anastasiou (Pissouri) Ltd and Others* [1994] ECR I-3087.

³¹³ See for the latest effort C. Palley, *An International Relations Debacle: The UN Secretary General's Mission of Good Services in Cyprus 1999 – 2004*, Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2005, A. Emilianides, 'Beyond the Servant State Paradigm: The Cyprus Problem Revisited' [2003 – 2004] Panteion Institute of International Relations Yearbook, p. 107 – 126.

³¹⁴ Protocol 10, Article 1 of the Treaty Concerning the Accession of the Republic of Cyprus, OJ L236 of 23 September 2003.

³¹⁵ *The Attorney - General of the Republic v. Mustafa Ibrahim* [1964] CLR 195.

Cyprus' system of government

Cyprus' system of government is presidential democracy based on the rule of law. There is a strong division between the executive, legislative and judicial powers, based on checks and balances; thus, the principle of separation of powers is considered as an implied constitutional principle of supreme importance. Following the accession of the Republic in the European Union, the Constitution of Cyprus was modified with Law 127(I)/2006, which aimed at facilitating the exercise of the rights and obligations of the Republic of Cyprus as a member state of the European Union; Article 1A of the Constitution now provides that no constitutional provision may invalidate any laws, acts or measures which arise from the obligations of the Republic of Cyprus as a member state of the European Union, or impede the legal effect and application of Regulations, Directives or other European Union, or European Communities' legal instruments in the Republic. As a result, European Union and European Community law now has an intra-constitutional effect, in the sense that it is considered to be an integral part of the Constitution and no constitutional provision may invalidate any provision of European Community law.

Cyprus has a pluralistic system of political parties. Political parties are a fundamental element of public life and their function is an essential element of the constitutional order.³¹⁶ The two largest political parties in Cyprus are the communist oriented Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL), which is a member of the European United Left in the European Parliament, and the right wing Democratic Rally (DISI), which is a member of the European People's Party; each party has 18 seats in the House of Representatives and represents approximately 30% of the voting population. The centrist Democratic Party (DIKO) has 11 seats in the House of Representatives and represents approximately 18% of the voting population, while the Socialist Movement for Social Democracy (EDEK) has 5 seats in the House of Representatives and represents approximately 9% of the voting population. Smaller political parties that are currently represented in the House of Representatives are the right wing European Party, and the Ecological and Environmental Movement.

During the 2008 Presidential Elections the Secretary General of AKEL, Dimitris Christofias, was elected as the first communist head of state in a European Union country. Christofias survived a close first round having received 33.29% of the votes, trailing the candidate of DISI Ioannis Kasoulides who received 33.51% of the votes, but surpassing the former President Tassos Papadopoulos, who was supported by a coalition of DIKO, EDEK, the European Party and the Ecological and Environmental Movement and received 31.79% of the votes. During the second round between Christofias and Kasoulides, DIKO and EDEK supported Christofias and he was thus elected, after receiving 53.37% of the votes. While Christofias is considered to be a communist President and AKEL is theoretically still a Leninist - Marxist political party, in practice AKEL and Christofias function within a free market economy and have no intention of interfering with the free market; AKEL has, however, expressed from time to time reservations with respect to Cyprus' participation in the European Union and the adoption of the euro as the official currency.

³¹⁶ For a development of political parties in Cyprus see S. Zavou, *The Political Parties of Cyprus in the 20th Century*, Athens: Kastaniotis, 2002, in Greek. For the legal framework see D. Melissas, *Political Parties in the Republic of Cyprus: The Development towards Institutionalisation*, Athens: A. Sakkoulas, 1996, in Greek.

The system of election for the European Parliament

The first and - so far only - elections of Members of the European Parliament in Cyprus were held in 2004 and concerned the 2004 – 2009 term of the European Parliament. The elections were held as part of the wider 2004 European election, with the vote taking place on 13th June. Cyprus was considered as a single constituency for the purposes of the elections and the same rule shall apply with respect to the 2009 elections. The number of registered voters of the 2004 elections was 483,311, out of which 503 were Turkish Cypriots and 2,054 European Union nationals; the total number of voters was 350,387, or 72.50% of the registered voters. The communist oriented Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL), and the right wing Democratic Rally (DISI), each elected two deputies, while the centrist Democratic Party and the newly constituted right wing coalition 'For Europe' each elected one deputy. The coalition 'For Europe' no longer exists as a political party, having been dissolved; many of the members of 'For Europe' now participate in the European Party, while others have joined the Democratic Rally. The leader of the coalition 'For Europe' and its elected Deputy, Yiannakis Matsis, former President of the Democratic Rally, does not currently officially belong to either party, although he is a member of the European People's Party.

Law 10(I)/2004 providing for the Election of the Members of the European Parliament incorporates Directive 93/109/EC of the Council of 6 December 1993. While it is provided that all Cypriots over the age of 18 have the right to vote in elections, a person may not stand as a member of the European Parliament unless (s)he is at least 25 years old; such provision is similar to the prescribed age of candidacy relating to members of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus. According to Section 13 of Law 10(I)/2004 a person is also not allowed to stand for election if such person has been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty or moral turpitude, or is under any disqualification imposed by a competent court for any electoral offence, or if such person is suffering from a mental disease that results in incapacity from acting as a Member of the European Parliament. The aforementioned impediments are identical to those provided with regard to members of the national House of Representatives in Article 64 of the Constitution of Cyprus.

Further, similarly to what is provided in Article 70 of the Constitution, Section 16 of Law 10(I)/2004 provides that the position of a Member of the European Parliament shall be incompatible with that of a Minister or of a member of a Communal Chamber, or of a member of any municipal council including a Mayor, or of a member of the armed or security forces of the Republic or with a public or municipal office or, in the case of a Representative elected by the Turkish Community, of a religious functionary. A person may only stand as a candidate so long as such person has been previously registered in either the permanent electoral roll, or the special electoral roll concerning election of Members of the European Parliament.³¹⁷

National party rules and procedures for the selection of candidates

Procedures and specifications

The main section of the briefing paper shall focus upon the rules and procedures for the selection of candidates for the European Parliament by national parties. In order to assess the system, the three major parties represented in the European Parliament - namely AKEL, DISI and DIKO - form the core of the study. The three aforementioned parties are the three largest

³¹⁷ Shener Levent v. Adamos Adamou and Others [2005] 4 CLR 746 (in Greek).

political parties in Cyprus and thus apply the most formalised selection procedures. The fourth largest political party in Cyprus, EDEK, had lost the final seat in the last European elections of 2004 for only a margin of 37 votes and, in the last national elections for the House of Representatives, represented approximately 9% of the voters; it is therefore included in the present study. Due to the dissolution of the coalition 'For Europe', it has been considered that the European Party should also be included in the present study, since it is a party which consists of a merge of the remains of the former coalition 'For Europe' and the New Horizons political party; the European Party represented in the last national elections approximately 6% of the popular vote. Although the Ecological and Environmental Movement has not been formally included in the present study, its procedures are also briefly analysed, since it is a political party which has won 2% of the popular vote in the latest parliamentary elections and is represented in the House of Representatives.

The rules and procedure of each national political party are presented in the following manner: the research starts by analysing party statutes or rules of procedure where applicable. Where appropriate interviews with party officials were carried out in order to clarify current practices, get information on informal communication and steps preparing candidate selection. Lastly, the potential impact of the European political parties and the political groups in the European Parliament on such procedures is evaluated. The study therefore describes and analyses the procedures applied by national political parties to establish their electoral lists or other means of selecting candidates for the elections to the European Parliament.

Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL)

Candidate Selection Procedures

The Communist oriented Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL) was founded in 1941 and is the successor of the Communist Party of Cyprus which was founded in 1926. AKEL is a member of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left in the European Parliament. In the elections of 2004 for the European Parliament, it elected two Deputies, having received 27.9% of the popular vote. In the 2006 Cyprus legislative elections, AKEL remained the largest political party in the island winning 18 seats with 32.3% of the votes. The internal structure and functioning of AKEL is quite rigid and this includes the procedure of selecting candidates for the European Parliament, which is essentially identical to the procedure of selecting candidates for the national House of Representatives. The Constitution of AKEL was first adopted by the Pancyprian Party Conference in April 1946 and has subsequently been amended, with the last amendment having occurred in 1995; in the same year the Regulations for the functioning of AKEL were approved.³¹⁸

Section 26 of the Constitution of AKEL provides that party members elected to public offices (and this includes members of the European Parliament), should form a group which shall be the vehicle of the party policy in the respective parliamentary organ. Party members should neither profit nor lose financially from the assumption of such public offices; it is further provided that the public office a party member holds is at the disposal of the Party. In view of the above, it becomes obvious that in order for a candidate to be selected as a member of AKEL in the European Parliament, such candidate ought to be an individual fully committed to the beliefs, ideals and aims of the Party. AKEL expects that any of its candidates, if elected, shall pay a sum of their earnings to their party and shall strictly follow the party's decisions. If a Deputy

³¹⁸ Both the Constitution and the Regulations may be viewed, *inter alia*, in the party's website www.akel.org.cy

does not adhere to the decisions of the Party, then such Deputy essentially ought to quit, since the public office a party member holds should be at the disposal of the Party. It is therefore the Party and not the individual candidate, or Deputy, who is the guiding force according to AKEL's Constitution.

AKEL has a very formalised procedure for selecting candidates for the national or the European Parliament; such rules are provided for in the Regulations for the Functioning of AKEL of 1995. It is provided that at a special meeting, the Central Committee of the Party decides upon the commencement of the pre-election period and announces to the Party members and the friends of the Party its intention to accept nominations. All the members and friends of the Party have the right to submit proposals for candidates; such proposals are submitted through the meetings of the Party Groups or the Borough Committees (which concern smaller districts) called for this purpose. All members are invited to attend such meetings and have the right to submit nominations and to defend their suggestions, either orally or through a brief note which will dwell on the political virtues of the candidate proposed, on his/her contribution to and belief in the rights of the people, as well as on his/her abilities to generally serve from the position of Party member of the European Parliament. Subsequently, all proposals for candidates, together with views and comments of the assembly, are submitted to the District Committees, which also have the right to submit proposals.

When the meetings are completed, the Secretariat of the District Committee prepares a full list of the candidates and a plenary session of the District Committee is convened to discuss, appraise and put in order the candidates' list, having the following criteria in mind:

- a) The election ticket must be broad and representative, it must express the nature of the Party, of the Popular Movement and of the Left more generally. It must have a good combination of Party members and Party friends, of various ages, men and women; and it must include political, social and other personalities,
- b) The election ticket must create the best of impressions and, at the same time, it must offer the best possible choice both for the voter as well as for the functioning and effectiveness of the members of the European Parliament.

The District Committee then shapes its proposal with a secret vote and the full list of candidates is presented to the District Election Conference, which is specially convened for this purpose. All the elected bodies take part in this conference, as well as the members of the Central and District Councils of the mass organisations, such as the Pancyprian Federation of Labour, the Union of Cypriot Peasants, the Party's Women's Movement, as well as the Party's United Democratic Youth Organisation. The Conference, bearing in mind the criteria referred to above, discusses and decides by a secret vote. The list of candidates is then submitted to the Central Committee, which at a special meeting discusses and finally shapes the final list, taking seriously into account the decision of the District Election Conferences. Members of the Central Committee must have at least seven years of continuous and active party life and should have been elected by the Congress, which is the highest organ of the Party.

It could be observed that, while the views of the General Secretary of the Party are undoubtedly quite important in the formulation of the list of candidates for the European Parliament, the selection of candidates by AKEL is primarily a process that is the result of the participation of all major Party organs. In view of the rule that the public office a party member holds should always be at the disposal of the party, it is mostly believed that the selection of candidates should be eventually unanimous, or that any dissenting opinions should defer to the opinion of

the majority. In view of the rigidness of the internal structure of AKEL, the selection of candidates is a formalised procedure, which occurs internally. While it is thought that the Central Committee should be the final organ responsible for selecting the candidates of the Party, all views should be taken into account; the Central Committee shall not be deemed to perform its function properly if it disregards the views of the various Party organs. In essence, while the opinion of high party officials is always influential, the opinion of the various Party organs and mass organisations should also be considered as decisive.

As already stated, the list of candidates should be broad, and representative of the Party, including Party members and friends of various ages – men and women – so as to create the best impressions and offer the best possible choice for the voter. The final list of candidates may not restrict to party officials; it should also consist of successful professionals, or personalities from the social and economic life of the country, representatives of the working movement and preferably representatives of certain of the mass organisations which are related to the Party. Since Cyprus consists of only one constituency in the elections for the European Parliament, there should also be an effort for various districts to be represented in the final list of candidates. Such criteria were taken into account in the selection of the candidates for the elections of 2004. The criteria for selecting the candidates for the European Parliament by AKEL are therefore of a national-local character; the impact of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left, if any, is virtually non-existent.

Specific criteria for the selection of candidates and current practices

As already mentioned, the two biggest political parties in the country (AKEL and DISI) both want to win the stakes of receiving the most votes in the European elections. As explicitly stated by Mr Andros Kyprianou, '*AKEL wants to win these elections*'.³¹⁹ Since the President of the Republic of Cyprus is, for the first time, from the ranks of AKEL, it is even more vital for the party to attract as many voters as possible in the 2009 elections, because this will also be interpreted as a 'vote of confidence' to the Government by the public. So, the forthcoming elections are also important to AKEL for symbolic reasons.³²⁰

As a result of this, the Party is particularly eager to attract as many of its voters as possible and thus, apart from the formal candidate selection procedures laid out in the Party's Constitution, some specific criteria are also of paramount importance. In order to therefore achieve this aspired higher turnout by its supporters, as disclosed by Mr Kyprianou, it is preferable for the candidates to be senior and/or distinguished party officials, who are also recognisable figures, and thus people can attach to them an element of familiarity.³²¹ Since voters act primarily upon a party-centric line, this familiarity can play an important role. Moreover, if a candidate has traditionally assumed people's respect and his/her positions on issues of 'internal consumption' are generally popular, voters may also feel a sense of duty in voting for the particular candidate. Clearly then, some specific criteria for candidate selection, which are not included under the formal party procedures, are the familiarity and popularity of the candidate.

³¹⁹ Interview with Mr Andros Kyprianou, spokesman of AKEL, 23.12.2008.

³²⁰ As a party official of AKEL has revealed on the grounds of anonymity, AKEL is also open to coalitions with small parties (e.g. the Greens) if they estimate that this will essentially attract more voters. If there will eventually be a coalition, this will only be in order to secure for AKEL the first place in the elections.

³²¹ Interview with Mr Andros Kyprianou, spokesman of AKEL, 23.12.2008.

Mr Kyprianou also emphasised that another important criterion is the potential candidate's experience in handling European issues, as well as his/her knowledge of these.³²² Finally, it is imperative that the potential candidate is in a position to adeptly present/defend the party line in the pre-election campaign, as this is a good opportunity for the party to put forth its position on European issues.³²³ Bearing especially in mind the fact that AKEL is a party that is generally recognised in Cyprus as the one that follows a more Euroskeptic line, it is important to 'market' its position on European issues, and convince voters that potential AKEL MEPs will work well in the European Parliament for their party and their country.

The impact of European Political Parties and Political Groups on candidate selection procedures

AKEL participates in the European United Left – Nordic Green Left within the European Parliament. The Group has no influence upon the composition of the Party's electoral list or any other means of selecting candidates for the European elections.

It is interesting to note that this European political Group does not have any impact on voters in Cyprus, in terms of influencing them in any way when it comes to their voting decision. This is so albeit the fact that the European United Left – Nordic Green Left has had a very consistent line on the Cyprus issue over the years.

Democratic Rally (DISI)

Candidate selection procedures

The right-wing Democratic Rally (DISI) was founded in 1976 and is a member of the European People's Party. In the 2004 European Parliamentary Elections, DISI gained 28.2% of the popular vote and elected two Deputies, while in the 2006 national parliamentary elections it won 30.3% of the votes, securing 18 seats. The procedure of selecting candidates for the European Parliament is essentially identical to the procedure of selecting candidates of the national House of Representatives. The Charter of DISI was last amended in 2002.

Section 42 of the Charter explicitly provides that the Party ought in principle to participate in all elections, with its own candidates, or through supporting candidates who agree on and share the program, aims and goals of the Party. The Party may, however, collaborate with other parties or political groups, following negotiations with the Political Bureau of the Party, which are approved by the High Council. In case that an agreement is reached concerning co-operation with another political party, or group, the provisions of the Charter concerning selection of candidates only apply with respect to the selection of the candidates of DISI.

The selection of candidates of DISI is the result of a formalised selection procedure, which takes place within the party organs. A candidate must be a member of the Party, dedicated to the Party's principles and Charter, of high moral standards, of political acuteness of judgment and of valued skills, so as to be efficient in carrying out their public service. In addition, such candidates must be well known and popular and must be willing to meet and facilitate their voters and the public in general. Thus, the main criteria for selecting the candidates of the Party consist of popularity, diversity, as well as competence of the candidates concerned. The aim of

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Ibid.

DISI is to present to its voters the ‘best group of candidates, having knowledge, experience, credibility and being able to represent Cyprus in Europe in an efficient manner’.³²⁴

The procedure for selecting the candidates, as provided in Section 43 of the Charter provides that each member of the party may apply in order to be included in the list of candidates for the elections, so long as such person has been a party member for at least six months and has fulfilled all financial obligations towards the Party. Candidates are then selected in two stages. During the first stage, an Electoral Assembly is convened; all Party members, as well as adult members of the Youth organisation of the Party, may participate. The Electoral Assembly then elects a number of candidates which exceeds the available seats by one; the result of such election is transmitted to the Political Bureau, which finalises the list of candidates, after taking into account the broader interests of the Party. The President of the Party has the right to include a number of candidates selected by him personally, even if such candidates were not members of the Party; in the latter case, such candidates instantly become members of the Party.

The Political Bureau, consisting of the President, the Deputy President and twelve members, is the organ which is called upon to decide who will be the candidates of the Party for the European Parliament, taking into account the broader Party interests. The views of the President of DISI are of significant importance in the formulation of the final list of candidates; thus, the President of DISI is the most influential Party official in deciding on who should be included in the final list of candidates; however, the list is often a compromise between members belonging to the main Party groups. DISI’s final list of candidates of 2004 consisted of well-known members of the national House of Representatives, or Party officials; it would therefore seem that the Party aimed at convincing the voters through the presentation of a list of candidates who are active politicians and party officials and therefore, *prima facie*, popular.

While the criteria for selecting the candidates to the European Parliament are primarily local in character, it would seem that there is also some impact of the European People’s Party in the sense that the selected candidates should be considered as reliable individuals, who will represent the Party successfully within the European People’s Party. For DISI, participating in the European People’s Party is a privilege and therefore its selected candidates ought to be capable of representing the Party in the best possible manner, and to co-operate with other right-wing Members of the European Parliament.³²⁵

Specific criteria for the selection of candidates and current practices

Like in the case of AKEL, DISI also wants to ‘win’ these elections in terms of receiving the most votes.³²⁶ This is, to a great extent, due of a traditional ‘antagonism’ between the two largest parties in the country. In addition, however, it is also due to the fact that, as the main opposition party, DISI would like to see the 2009 European elections being used by the voters, to a degree, as leverage for protesting against their government. Moreover, the fact that DISI is generally perceived by the public as the most pro-European party is a further stimulus for seeking to attract the most votes.

³²⁴ Nicos Anastasiades, Leader of DISI, “Presentation of the Candidates for the European Parliament”, speech delivered on 21/5/2004.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Interview with Mr Ionas Nicolaou, Vice-President of DISI, 22.12.2008.

Owing to this inducement, similar to AKEL, DISI also has some specific criteria that it considers for the purposes of candidate selection, apart from the formal procedures that are specified in the Party's Charter. As Mr Ionas Nicolaou explicitly reported, being a Party official is considered an asset, yet it is by no means a prerequisite for a potential candidate.³²⁷ What is considered to be of much greater importance than party membership is for the person who stands as a candidate to be a known personality that attracts popularity and one that comes from the wider ideological setting.

According to Mr Nicolaou, it is significant for a potential MEP to have adequate knowledge of European issues and/or experience in handling these.³²⁸ Nonetheless, the fact that people vote in these elections primarily along national and party-centric lines, renders these aforementioned criteria as almost submissive. Similarly, the importance attached by the party to the potential candidate's ability to work well within the corresponding European party in the European Parliament, also plays a subservient role to national matters in influencing voters. As a result, DISI's pre-election campaign will focus on issues of 'domestic consumption', even though an assessment of the current DISI MEP's presence in the European Parliament will be made.³²⁹

The impact of European Political Parties and Political Groups on candidate selection procedures

DISI participates in the European People's Party within the European Parliament. The Party has no influence upon the composition of the Party's electoral list or any other means of selecting candidates for the European elections. Nevertheless, in a very indirect way the Party can play a small role in influencing candidate selection; as disclosed by Mr Ionas Nicolaou, it is important for DISI to know that a potential MEP candidate can be effective and can work well within this corresponding European Party upon his/her election.

It is interesting to note that the European People's Party does not have any impact on voters in Cyprus, in terms of influencing them in any way when it comes to their voting decision.

Democratic Party (DIKO)

Candidate selection procedures

The centrist Democratic Party (DIKO) was founded in 1976 and is a member of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe. In the 2004 elections for the European Parliament, it elected one Deputy, having secured 17.1% of the votes, while in the parliamentary elections of 2006 it received 17.9% of the votes, winning 11 seats. The procedure of selecting candidates for the European Parliament is virtually identical to the procedure of selecting candidates of the national House of Representatives. The current Charter of DIKO was enacted in 2000. Section 57 of the Charter stipulates that internal regulations shall provide for the selection of Candidates to the European Parliament.

Owing to the fact that the Party's Charter does not specify formal procedures for establishing electoral lists for the European elections, the Party's Executive Office decides upon a procedure every time that elections to the European Parliament are held. One of two possible scenarios can

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Ibid.

be followed: nominations can be filed by individuals themselves, or names can be proposed to the Party's Executive Office and the latter will approach the potential candidates. If more than six names are put forth, the Executive Office will have the final decision. The President of the Party has a decisive role, albeit informally so. Even though (s)he cannot arbitrate on the final composition of the electoral list, (s)he may indirectly have the final say about, at least, some of the candidates.

Specific Criteria for the Selection of Candidates and Current Practices

DIKO's objective from the 2009 European elections is to maintain the Party's percentages (to the levels obtained in the 2006 national parliamentary elections). DIKO believes that the Party will certainly elect one candidate in the European Parliament. Nonetheless, it is important for the Party to elect this candidate without witnessing a drop in its statistics.

The Party will therefore try to select people that satisfy the criteria of these objectives. Senior party officials that enjoy popularity will thus be preferred, so as to attract more voters. As disclosed by Mr Angelides, the Party does not preclude the option of collaboration with personalities that are not party officials but nonetheless come from the broader ideological spectrum.³³⁰ As far as knowledge of European issues is concerned, this will be considered as an additional asset for a potential candidate.

In addition to these, geographical criteria will also be taken into account in an effort to attract candidates from all districts. Due to the small number of candidates, the people chosen must receive general acceptance in the whole of the country. According to Mr Angelides, voters in Cyprus are emotionally attached to their parties and sometimes linked to them through family traditions. Finally, it is important for these voters to see a name on their electoral list that they can associate with their party.³³¹

The impact of European Political Parties and Political Groups on candidate selection procedures

DIKO participates in the Liberal Group within the European Parliament. Nevertheless, the Party does not associate itself fully with its corresponding European Groups, as the position of the latter on the 'Cyprus issue' is not a favourable one. DIKO wants to gradually move to the Party of European Socialists, but this is difficult, in view of the fact that another party, namely EDEK, is a member of such Party.

The Liberal Group does not have any impact on voters in Cyprus in terms of influencing them in any way when it comes to their voting decision.

Socialist Movement for Social Democracy (EDEK)

Candidate selection procedures

The Socialist Movement for Social Democracy (EDEK) was founded in 1969 and is a member of the Party of European Socialists. In the 2004 elections for the European Parliament, it failed to

³³⁰ Interview of Mr Andreas Angelides, parliamentary representative of DIKO, 19.12.2008.

³³¹ Ibid.

elect any Deputies, despite having secured 10.7% of the popular vote. In the 2006 parliamentary elections, the Party won 8.9% and secured 5 seats.

EDEK's Charter does not make any provisions relating to formal procedures for establishing electoral lists for the European Parliament elections. The issue of candidate selection, and any other procedures relating to the European elections, is being handled by a special ad hoc working group, which is appointed by the Party's Political Office in each election. This working group is in continuous consultation with the Party's President. It ought to be noted that, the procedure of selecting candidates for the European Parliament is virtually identical to the procedure of selecting the candidates for the national House of Representatives.

If the ad hoc working group selects six candidates, then these are most likely to be approved by the Party's Central Committee. If, however, more than six candidates are selected, then discussion will take place at the level of the Central Committee before a decision is reached. The final decision on candidate selection is in the hands of the Central Committee. It is worth noting that in EDEK the President has a determining and decisive role, as he possesses the power to specify all six of the candidates.

Specific criteria for the selection of candidates and current practices

EDEK's main objective for the 2009 European elections is to manage to elect one MEP. In the 2004 elections this seat was lost for 37 votes. As a result, Cyprus had no representatives in the second largest European Party during the period 2004-2009. So in the forthcoming European elections EDEK will work hard to secure the seat that they so marginally lost in the previous term.³³²

Owing to the 2004 experience, and to EDEK's overall percentages (the Party assumes about 9% of the electorate), it is very important for the Party to select the best six candidates, as there is no room for mistakes.³³³ Thus Party Officials will be preferred in order to attract as many traditional EDEK voters as possible. At the same time however, EDEK will also try to attract people who do not traditionally vote for EDEK, but share, nonetheless, the Party's ideology.³³⁴

Finally, the selected candidates must have good knowledge of European issues, and they must be able to convince voters, in the pre-election campaign, that it is imperative for Cyprus to be represented in the Party of European Socialists – the second largest party in the European Parliament.

The impact of European Political Parties and Political Groups on the candidate selection procedures

EDEK appreciates that European political parties and political groups do not play a role in the national candidate selection procedure in any way. Nevertheless, the Party will try to persuade the electorate that it is vital for Cypriot MEPs to participate in the Party of European Socialists in the European Parliament. EDEK's argument is that such an absence (especially for a second successive term) could be catastrophic; the Socialist Party is traditionally sympathetic to Cyprus'

³³² Mr Dimitris Papadakis, spokesman of EDEK, 12.01.2009.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid.

political position, and this should not be jeopardised through another five years of absence from the group.³³⁵ The challenge for EDEK is to make this necessity of participation a mainstream issue in the run-up to the 2009 European elections.

European Party

Candidate selection procedures

The European Party was founded in 2005, comprising officials of the former 'For Europe' coalition and the New Horizons political Party. It is a member of the European Democratic Party. The 'For Europe' coalition, comprising several members of the Democratic Rally, and led by the former President of the Democratic Rally secured 10.8% of the votes in the 2004 elections for the European Parliament and succeeded in electing its leader to the European Parliament. In the 2006 parliamentary elections, the European Party won 5.8% of the popular vote, thereby securing three seats in the House of Representatives.

The Charter of the European Party specifies no formal provisions for candidate selection procedures for the European elections. This will be the first time that this Party participates in the European elections, so it is a chance to establish some informal procedures.

The main decision making body is the Party Council. The Party shall also establish a working group to consider the whole process of selection. If the procedure only involves the Party then it will be an entirely internal procedure. If however collaboration with another political or social movement is established, then a contact group between the Party and the movement will be delegated for reasons of collaboration and communication.

Specific criteria for the selection of candidates and current practices

The Party's main objective is to maintain or expand its percentages (the Party assumes about 6% of the electorate). The aim is to bring closer to the Party people who belong to the same or similar ideological background, but also wants to use this elections in order to attract more members to the its ranks. According to Mr Koutsou, therefore, the Party would prefer to establish an electoral list that consists of both Party members and personalities coming from other political or social movements.³³⁶

On the basis of these calculations, the European Party posits that it will attract more voters and secure the necessary percentage for electing one MEP. Mr Koutsou contents that the sixth MEP seat will be claimed both by them and EDEK and it will be marginal between the two.³³⁷ ³³⁸

The impact of European Political Parties and Political Groups on the candidate selection procedures

The European Democratic Party, which is the European Party's corresponding group in the European Parliament, has no impact on candidate selection procedures in Cyprus. The

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Interview with Mr Nikos Koutsou, Vice-President of the European Party, 22.12.2008.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ EDEK opposes this argument, as they believe that the seat will be secured by them.

European Party believes that generally European parties and groups do not care about influencing Cypriot voters due to the very small number of MEPs that come from Cyprus.

Cyprus Ecological and Environmental Movement (Green Party)

Informal candidate selection procedures

The Cyprus Ecological and Environmental Movement (Green Party) was founded in 1996, comprising members of environmental, ecological, cultural and consumer organisations, as well as of various pressure groups. It is a member of the European Green Party. In the 2006 parliamentary elections, the European Party won 2.0% of the popular vote, thereby securing one seat in the House of Representatives. In the 2004 elections for the European Parliament, the Party had only secured 0.85% of the votes, thereby suffering a major defeat.

The Green Party's Charter makes no provisions with regard to candidate selection procedures for the European elections. In the absence of any formal procedural rules, the Political Committee of the Party is convened and agrees on a framework within which the procedure will take place. In this context, the final electoral list is decided at the level of this Committee. If deemed necessary, a National Party Convention is held.

Specific criteria for the selection of candidates and current practices

The Green Party will most likely not participate in the 2009 European elections, owing to the great defeat suffered in the 2004 elections.³³⁹ The only case in which the Party will participate in the elections is if it secures a coalition with another party (such as AKEL or EDEK).³⁴⁰ In the unlikely scenario therefore that the Party participates in the elections on its own, it will do so with the highest party officials as candidates – including the Secretary General – so as to attract the highest number of voters possible. If they decide to make a coalition with another party, then the Greens will nominate one or two members to the other party to put on the electoral list.³⁴¹

The Impact of European Political Parties and Political Groups on the candidate selection procedures

The European Greens have no impact on the procedure of candidate selection in Cyprus, and do not influence the Green Party of Cyprus in any way in relation to these elections. According to Mr Perdikis, the European Greens could have a negative influence on the electorate in Cyprus, as they are generally not very sympathetic to the positions of Cyprus with regard to the political problem of the country. Owing to this, however, it would be a good thing for the Cypriot Green Party to have an MEP in this group, who could influence the European Greens on the political issue.

³³⁹ Interview with Mr Yiorgos Perdikis, Secretary General of the Green Party, 18.12.2008.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

General conclusions

A central finding of this study is the lack of major differences between the procedures that are followed by the parties in the national elections and those followed in the European elections. None of the parties have specific provisions in their constitutions/ charters in relation to this issue. The two largest parties (AKEL and DISI), adhere to the same formal provisions which are followed with respect to national elections, while the remaining parties mostly rely on informal procedures. Yet all parties take into account a number of informal factors, and this will also be the case in the 2009 European elections. As the investigation revealed, the most important criteria for the parties in the procedure of candidate selection are a person's popularity, his/her position in the Party and ideological standing, as well as – albeit to a lesser extent arguably – his/her knowledge of European issues and expertise in handling them.

Another important finding that can be reported is the fact that European elections in Cyprus are fought predominantly along national lines. This can also be used to explain the conclusion that no key differences exist between national and European candidate selection procedures. In other words, this rather domestically insulated election process can partly account for the relative lack of impact that European political parties and political groups have upon the formulation of the electoral lists of national parties. As our investigation results revealed, these parties and groups do not influence the national candidate selection procedures. In light of these findings, a general conclusion that can be drawn is that the common and widely shared perception that European elections are informally classed as 'second order national elections', holds true in the case of Cyprus. The very fact that most parties do not have formal procedures guiding the process, or have very similar procedures to national elections, further enhances this judgment. In these European elections then, which traditionally attract lower turnout than national elections in most countries, what is deemed to be of highest importance to the parties when it comes to the selection of their candidates is to find names that will 'decorate' their electoral lists. This can be achieved by including public figures in their lists, which may be high party officials or personalities that usually share the party's ideology.

LATVIA

Introduction

Three issues are analyzed in this paper. Firstly, this research shortly describes the political and economic situation and legal background in Latvia prior the 2009 European Parliament (EP) elections. Secondly, this paper tries to describe and explain the procedures used by major Latvian political parties for candidate selection before the 2009 EP election. Thirdly, this paper assesses the impact of EP political groups on Latvian parties. The 2004 EP elections were a novel phenomenon because Latvian parties had to deal with the following questions for the first time. How to balance party's intellectual and human resources between national, municipal and European elections? How to integrate European issues into the national political environment? How important the EP elections would be for Latvian parties and how much financial resources should be allocated for these elections accordingly? Selection of candidates and strategies for dealing with European political groups were among the issues that had to be addressed before the previous EP election, and these issues are going to have an important impact on the 2009 elections to the EP as well.

Thus, the first part of the paper describes legislative, political and economic context of Latvia. Each EU member state is free to establish its own procedures for electing MEPs therefore the authors will outline the main traits of the system that is used in Latvia. Short description of the previous EP elections' results in Latvia would follow. The next section would outline the current economic and political background that is likely to influence party behavior before the upcoming elections in June 2009. The second part of the paper tackles the issue of candidate selection process in ten major Latvian political parties. It also evaluates the extent to which European political parties have an impact on Latvian parties. Main findings are presented in concluding part of the report.

Latvia's legislation on the EP elections

One principle that is observed in all EU member states is that citizens of the EU member states can cast their votes in country of residence rather than are compelled of the country of their citizenship.³⁴² Another principle is that all citizens of the EU member states who have reached the age of 18 have the right to vote in the EP elections. Usually, countries use the same election system for elections to the EP that they use for national elections. Thus Latvia uses the system of proportional representation that is used by most other member states. Also Latvia has set a 5% threshold that needs to be passed in order for a party to be represented in the EP.³⁴³ Technically, a party can meet this requirement and still not be represented in the EP because Latvia has to fill only eight seats in the 2009 EP elections.

Latvia uses the Saint-Lague method for assigning seats in the EP. As Arnis Cimdars who is the director of the Latvian Central Election Commission argues, the Saint-Lague method favors those parties that have achieved medium gains during elections.³⁴⁴ In Latvia in order to be

³⁴² In order to uphold this principle, voters need to register at a certain voting district.

³⁴³ Eiropas Parlamenta vēlēšanu likums (Law on Elections to the European Parliament), 2004.

³⁴⁴ Cimdars, A. Eiroparlamenta vēlēšanas: vispārīgie principi (Elections to the European Parliament: General Principles). Public policy portal „politika.lv”, 2004. <http://www.politika.lv/index.php?id=3193> Last accessed on internet, 25.01.2009.

eligible to run for a seat in the EP a person has to be at least twenty one years old. There are also other requirements that candidates need to fulfill, but these are not much different from those that are used in other EU member states.

Results of the previous EP elections

In the 2004 EP elections in Latvia sixteen party lists with 245 candidates competed for nine seats. The voter turnout was 41.34% or 577 879 voters.³⁴⁵ This was considerably more than the turnout in some other EU old and new member states, but this outcome was far lower than in elections to the national parliament, where voter turnout has oscillated between 60% and 70% in the four elections since Latvia regained its independence. Geoffrey Pridham writes that "the June 2004 European elections in Latvia saw a focus on issues of primarily domestic importance or immediate concern rather than questions of historical or long-term consequence".³⁴⁶ Fatherland and Freedom party won the elections almost by a landslide due to the campaign that appealed to the ethnic Latvian voters, thus they received almost 30% of the total vote and gained 4 out of 9 seats in the EP (see table 1).

Political party	%	EP seats
Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Movement (FF/LNIM)	29.82	4
New Era (NE)	19.71	2
For Human Rights in United Latvia (FHRUL)	10.66	1
People's Party (PP)	6.65	1
Latvia's Way (LW)	6.55	1
Latvia's Social Democratic and Workers' Party(LSDWP)	4.77	0
National Harmony Party (NHP)	4.77	0
Union of Greens and Farmers (UGF)	4.25	0
Latvia's First Party (LFP)	3.24	0
United Social Democratic Welfare Party (SDWP)	2.23	0

Table 1: Results of Latvia's 2004 elections to the European Parliament

Success of the FF/LNIM was made possible because of several reasons. First, it was because of the party's choice of best candidates available. The list included an ex-prime minister and minister of defence. Second, FF/LNIM has since long positioned itself as a national conservative political party, thus voters decided that FF/LNIM is well equipped to defend national interests in the EP. The results of the 2004 EP elections were quite unusual because FF/LNIM was a niche party before. Thus, it was quite an upset for larger parties in Latvia, particularly to the clear winners of the 2002 parliamentary elections – New Era and People's Party.

³⁴⁵ Eiropas Parlamenta velešanas (Elections to the European Parliament). Central Election Commission. <http://web.cvk.lv/pub/public/27611.html> Last accessed on internet, 25.01.2009.

³⁴⁶ Pridham, G. The European Parliament Election in LatviaEuropean Parties Elections and Referendums Network, 2004.

Political and economic context before the upcoming elections in June 2009

The overall political and economic situation in Latvia is very heated and is likely to remain such through the 2009 EP elections. Political situation has deteriorated ever since the Fall of 2006 when the current national parliament was elected.³⁴⁷ The ruling coalition tried to adopt a series of very controversial decisions and legislative acts throughout 2007. These include notoriously famous amendments to the law on national security, selection process of the current president Valdis Zatlers, and several other issues. There have been two unsuccessful referenda and mass protests against the ruling coalition that consists of the People's Party, Union of Greens and Farmers, Latvia's First Party / Latvia's Way, Fatherland and Freedom. Major reasons for discontent among opposition parties are lack of basic legislature and the post-Soviet tradition of stigmatizing the opposition as the antisocial element. After mass rally on January 13, 2009 riots followed in response to several years of government's mismanagement of economy, and that resulted in parliament building being slightly damaged and looting of a liquor store in the Old Town.

The next parliamentary elections are scheduled for October 2010. However, because of global financial crisis and domestic political turmoil situation has deteriorated thus quickly that early elections seem to be inevitable.³⁴⁸ The ruling coalition was vehemently against early elections before, but situation changed since the events of January 13/2009. Holder of the majority of seats in the parliament – People's Party (PP) – changed its tack, and is now in favor of early elections, and pushes constitutional amendments through the parliament that would allow MP's to sack themselves. Opposition parties' tactics changed since the PP announcement, and the former are content with the presidential plan to follow the constitutional path that would probably entitle to hold the referendum calling for early elections on June 6, when the referendum could be conveniently married to municipal and EP elections.

Popular trust in political parties has irreversibly declined since March 2007, when the former president Vaira Vīķe Freiberga shortly before the end of her tenure announced about the system of endemic corruption in the Latvian parliament. Political trust was quite low already before, but at the moment more than 90% of general public has no confidence in political parties.³⁴⁹ Disillusionment about political and economic policy of the current and, specially, previous government is widespread. Also, Latvians do not think that their membership in the EU is a good thing. Only 27% think that Latvia's EU membership is a good thing. Latvian society is concerned about inflating prices and economic prospects.³⁵⁰ It comes, as no surprise that public does not trust the government even with regard to the deteriorating economic situation. A public opinion poll that was conducted in November 2008 shows that only 16% of respondents trusted statements of political parties and high-ranking officials on economic/financial situation in the country, while 72% had no trust.³⁵¹ Apart from Latvian pollsters also Eurobarometer surveys from 2004 onwards show constant decline of trust in Latvian government, parliament, political parties and the EU.

³⁴⁷ Rules of election financing campaign were breached, and the Senat of Administrative Department of the Supreme Court of Latvia stopped short of annuling the 2006 election results in its verdict of November 3, 2006.

³⁴⁸ "There will be snap elections in Latvia"!, January 18, 2009 in <http://spolitis.blogspot.com>

³⁴⁹ Standard Eurobarometer public survey No. 70, October-November 2008

³⁵⁰ Standard Eurobarometer 70. Public opinion in the European Union. December, 2008.

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb70/eb70_first_en.pdf Last accessed on internet, 28.01.2009.

³⁵¹ Tikai 16% Latvijas iedzīvotāju tic augstāko amatpersonu teiktajam par stāvokli valstī (Only 16% of inhabitants of Latvia trust high ranking officials on situation in the country). SKDS, November 2008.

<http://www.skds.lv/doc/Ticiba%20amatpersonam%2011.2008.pdf> Last accessed on internet, 25.01.2009.

Economic situation in Latvia has deteriorated rapidly in 2008. Latvia's economy is experiencing what professor at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga Mr Morten Hansen has described as "the hardest of soft landings".³⁵² After several years of spectacular growth Latvian economy fell into a recession. Latvia's GDP grew by 10.6% in 2005, by 12.2% in 2006 and by 10.3% in 2007. Economic growth stopped altogether in 2008, and by the end of the year it was clear that the Latvia's GDP has contracted by several percent.³⁵³ It is expected that Latvia's economy will shrink in 2009 by 5%, and the Bank of Latvia (BoL) has announced that the economy may contract even more³⁵⁴, because according to the governor of BoL Mr Rimšēvics "the Latvian economy has frozen"³⁵⁵. In this situation the government was forced to apply for a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). After a top level and heated negotiations the deal was sealed before Christmas, and the IMF, European Commission and several EU countries would provide a sum of 7.5 billion euros that would be made available to Latvian government over a period of three years starting from January 2009.

Unemployment reached seven percent by the end of 2008 according to the State Employment Agency, and this number could reach 14% by the end of the 2009.³⁵⁶ On the other hand earnings from exports have been on decline. Also, one of the biggest Latvian banks – Parex – was nationalized, and government was forced to supply the ailing bank with liquid assets to keep it solvent. This contributed to the financial downturn, and anxiety ensued among the general public about the possible devaluation of the national currency. Economic situation somewhat stabilized by January 2009, but the rising unemployment makes dissatisfied groups restless. In sum, such unstable background before the June 2009 municipal and European elections deteriorated to the point that early parliamentary elections seemed inevitable. However, political situation stabilized with the formation of Valdis Dombrovskis (New Era) government therefore it is likely that Latvia will escape triple elections in 2009.

Analysis of ten major political parties

The authors of this report have selected ten political parties that are listed in Table 2. Following parties are included in the analysis because they received greatest public support during previous elections, and because public opinion polls show that at least 2% of general public are ready to vote for them.³⁵⁶ In fact, currently there is only one party – Harmony Centre – that enjoys popular support above 10%, according to public opinion surveys, and then there are eight other political parties whose public support oscillates between 2% and 6%. Approximately one

³⁵² Government officials were insisting that Latvia would go through the process of „soft landing” instead of „hard landing” after its economy overheated in the years following Latvia's EU accession. However, today it is increasingly clear that the state of Latvia's economy is best described as an example of „hard landing”.

³⁵³ Par iekšzemes kopprodukta ātro novērtējumu 2008. gada trešajā ceturksnī (Evaluation of GDP in the third quarter of 2008). Latvian Bureau of Statistics, 2008.

http://www.csb.gov.lv/csp/events/csp/events/?mode=arh&period=11.2008&cc_cat=470&id=5742 Last accessed on internet, 28.01.2009.

³⁵⁴ Latvijas Bankas prezidenta Ilmāra Rimšēviča preses konference (Press conference of the president of the Bank of Latvia). 15.01.2009. <http://www.bank.lv/lat/main/all/sapinfo/preskonf/2009/janv/> Last accessed on internet, 26.01.2009.

³⁵⁵ LETA, 29.01.09, Rimšēvičs: Latvijas ekonomika ir sasaususi (Latvian economy is frozen) - <http://www.leta.lv/lat/news/?id=84BE47EB-DB03-46C1-A2A9-90052DD9D892> Last accessed on internet, 30.01.2009

³⁵⁶ TP popularitāte dilst, SCP – aug (People's Party's popularity on the decline, Society's for Political Change – on the rise). Diena, 30.09.2008.

third of the total population has not decided which party they would vote for if elections would happen tomorrow.³⁵⁷ These numbers reflect not only lack of support for the governing parties in particular, but also alienation from the political establishment in general. The following table displays results of the ten largest political parties in Latvia with regard to the last parliamentary elections, elections to the EP and latest opinion polls.

Political party	2004 elections to the EP	2006 elections to the national parliament	Public opinion survey, 12.2008	Public opinion survey, 01.2009*
Fatherland and Freedom (FF/LNIM)	29.82	6.94	2.0	2.5
New Era (NE)	19.71	16.38	6.0	5.1
For Human Rights in United Latvia (FHRUL)	10.66	6.03	3.4	5.7
People's Party (PP)	6.65	19.56	2.7	2.5
Latvia's Social Democratic and Workers' Party (LSDWP)	4.77	3.50	0.8	1.9
National Harmony Party (HC) ³⁵⁸	4.77	14.42	11.4	9.0
Union of Greens and Farmers (UGF)	4.25	16.71	5.5	4.0
Latvia's First Party / Latvia's Way (LFP/LW) ³⁵⁹	3.24/6.55	8.58	3.2	3.3
United Social Democratic Welfare Party (SDLP) ³⁶⁰	2.23	-	-	-
Party - Society for Political Change (PSPC)	-	-	3.4	4.6
Civic Union (CU)	-	-	3.0	2.6

Table 2: Results of the EP and national elections and results of the latest public opinion polls³⁶¹

Authors of the report have dropped two parties from analysis, despite the fact that one of them managed to win over 2% of the popular vote in either the EP or elections to the national parliament. United Social Democratic Welfare Party had won 2.23% of the popular vote in 2004 European elections, but this party has ceased to exist in 2008. Politically Patriotic Union „Fatherland“ won 2.08% of the popular vote in 2006 national elections, but this party has also been terminated.³⁶² In addition two new parties were formed (Party - Society for Political Change, Civic Union), and because leaders of those parties had to leave parties from which they were elected either to national or the EP we considered them to be important to be included in our research. This leaves for analysis ten parties. Thus in order to learn positions and rules of the

³⁵⁷ ``Latvijas Fakti`` January poll shows that 36.4% of voters are undecided, and 17.8% are alienated from the politics (The question posed was: which party you would vote for if the parliamentary elections would take place tomorrow?)

³⁵⁸ National Harmony Party ran for the EP elections in 2004 as a separate party, but later in 2005 it formed a union with the Party „New Centre“, Daugavpils City Party, Latvian Socialist Party. Since 2005 it is known as a union of parties „Harmony Centre“.

³⁵⁹ Data on 2006 elections to the national parliament are shown together with Latvia's Way. The two parties participated with separate lists in the 2004 EP elections and merged in 2005.

³⁶⁰ United Social Democratic Welfare Party didn't run for the national elections in 2006, and it has not been visible on public opinion polls. According to available information, this party has ceased to exist.

³⁶¹ The results of public opinion polls are used from the ‘Latvijas fakti’ sociological firm

Politiskās partijas un to apvienības (Political parties and unions). Latvijas Republikas Uzņēmumu Reģistrs. <http://www.ur.gov.lv/partijas.html> Last accessed on internet, 24.01.2009.

ten major Latvian parties prior the EP elections the following chapter parties would be analyzed in the same sequence as in Table No. 2.

Fatherland and Freedom (FF/LNIM)

FF/LNIM was the biggest surprise in the first ever European Parliament elections in Latvia. The party secured four seats in the European Parliament (EP). This conservative right wing party union is unique among all other parliamentary represented parties today, because social groups outside the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) founded it. Latvian National Independence Movement (LNIM) sprouted from the Citizen's Committees³⁶³ and was formed as a movement in 1988. The latter won parliamentary representation, and merged with the radical Fatherland and Freedom Party (FF) in 1997, just a year prior the parliamentary elections whilst accepting the program of more radical FF. According to S. Duverger model FF/LNIM is the only party in Latvia that represents the bottom - up social mobilization trend, while top-notch politicians who split off other parties after continuous disagreements created the rest of Latvian parties.³⁶⁴ Because FF/LNIM decided to take part in the governing coalition in 2006, since PP leader Aigars Kalvītis invited FF/LNIM, the party ratings have witnessed steady decline together with the rest of governing coalition parties. While following Simon Hix argument about EU electors voting for opposition parties in the EP elections, and punishing incumbent parties we may witness reversal of FF/LNIM fortunes in 2009.³⁶⁵ Because FF/LNIM was not part of governing coalition in 2004 and used their tactics of "Russian scare", they made a spectacular performance. Now, the support for FF/LNIM has sunk very low, and voters could punish them for being members of the governing coalition.

Rules of the FF/LNIM state that any individual party member of the party union is entitled to nominate candidates for the EP elections within limits of time that is stipulated by the Party Board. Restrictions apply in terms of financial duties and party tenure. The Art. 105 state that candidates may be nominated only if they have paid their membership fees regularly. After nominations party lists are approved in the party council on recommendations made by the Party Board. FF/LNIM has several special positions of group leaders, who specialize in myriad of tasks (Art. 33). According to party rules specific group leaders are entitled to take part in the EP election campaign, and those EP deputies that are elected as members of the group must report in the group meeting their activities no less than once a year.³⁶⁶

Although FF/LNIM won four seats in 2004 election, now two FF/LNIM elected MEP's joined the newly created Civic Union and Guntars Krasts left the party but is still the MEP. FF/LNIM wanted to become part of the Alliance of Liberals group in 2004, but they did not succeed, thus they became part of the Union for Europe Nations group. The upcoming election campaign organizer Mr Jakrins confirmed that there is no real influence exerted from the UEN party group, and FF/LNIM would continue their work in the same party group.

³⁶³ Citizens Committees while coordinating their activities with the Estonian Citizen's Congress during the interregnum between proclamation of independence and de jure sovereignty. Citizen's Committee started listing citizens of the Republic of Latvia that was occupied in June 1940 by the USSR, but never recognized by major Western countries, as opposing the illegitimacy of the regime that was continued from the remnants of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic.

³⁶⁴ Interview with Dr. Axel Reetz, January 10, 2009

³⁶⁵ Simon Hix & Michael March, Punishment or Protest? Understanding European Parliament Elections, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 69, Issue 2, pp. 495-510, May 2007

³⁶⁶ FF/LNIM rules. <http://www.tb.lv/page.php?pgID=1d7f7abc18fc43975065399b0d1e48e&lang=est> Last accessed on internet, 29.01.2009.

New Era (NE)

NE is one of the leading and most popular parties in Latvia. It was formed before the 2002 national elections, and it immediately became the most popular party in Latvia therefore it was no surprise that it won 26 seats in national parliament (23.9% of the popular vote). The NE party has been quite influential and has managed to gain representation in Riga City Council and the EP (two seats), and it has managed to win a large number of seats – 18 seats with 16.38% of the popular vote – in the latest national election in 2006.³⁶⁷ Despite the success the NE has been sidelined by the ruling coalition after the 2006 election, and this caused considerable internal disagreement that led to the decision by many of NE's members to leave the party. As a consequence, the NE faction in the parliament dwindled by 4 seats.³⁶⁸ Due to instability of the political landscape in Latvia, there have been constant speculations about the possibility that the ruling coalition would invite the NE party to become part of the coalition government, but this hasn't happened yet.

The NE party regards representation in the EP as an important part of its political activities, and it would like to sustain its representation in the EP beyond June 2009. The procedure of candidate selection has been started in the second half of 2008, but the party program for the EP elections would need to be approved during the party congress.³⁶⁹ The Board decided that members of the party would need to apply for nomination to the EP election themselves.³⁷⁰ Party has developed a short questionnaire, and it is required that potential candidates are asked to describe their previous experience and activities, explain way they would like to be elected to the EP, what issues they would like to work with in the EP and what goals they would like to achieve by being elected to the EP. Also, potential candidates have to submit their CVs. After that Board evaluates applications, makes a decision on the final list and arranges the sequence of candidates on the list. There are indications that this system has worked quite well, and individuals lacking the necessary credentials have not applied for a place on the party list. Besides, this system has been chosen because it requires serious commitment from the candidates and certain degree of courage. The deadline for applications was 20th January 2009, and, according to the member of the NE faction in the parliament Jānis Reirs, the number of applications had been quite small and had not exceeded the number of spots on the party list.³⁷¹

The Board has great freedom with regard to the final composition of the list. It can place additional names on the list if it believes that the list is too weak for the EP elections. This system has been used during the 2004 elections to the EP, and then it was Board's decision to invite two

³⁶⁷ Saeimas vēlēšanu rezultāti (Results of parliamentary elections). Central Election Commission. <http://web.cvk.lv/pub/public/27427.html> Last accessed on internet, 24.01.2009.

³⁶⁸ Partijas „Jaunais laiks” frakcija (Faction of the „New Era” party”). Website of the national parliament. http://www.saeima.lv/deputati/1deputati_frakcijas.html Last accessed on internet, 29.01.2009.

³⁶⁹ Partijas „Jaunais laiks” Statūti (Statutes of the NE). <http://www.jaunaislaiks.lv/page.php?id=65> Last accessed on internet, 27.01.2009.

³⁷⁰ Procedure of candidate selection for the EP election is very different from candidate selection for national or municipal election because the candidates who agree to place their names on the list are required to spend a lot of time away from home. It means that party members can refuse to run for a seat in the EP due to personal reasons. There are indications that this has been a problem prior to the 2004 election when several of the top party members have declined Board's invitation to be nominated for the EP election due to personal reasons.

Also, the procedure of application submission that is currently used for the 2009 EP election is different from the one that was used before the 2004 European elections when party members were asked to nominate their peer party members for the election.

³⁷¹ Interview with a member of NE faction in the national parliament Jānis Reirs, 20.01.2009.

of the top party members to put their names on the list in order to improve the prospects of gaining representation in the EP. There are indications that it will not be necessary to put additional names on the candidate list before the 2009 EP election because both of NE's current MEPs – Aldis Kušķis and Valdis Dombrovskis – have agreed to run for re-election, and the party regards them as strong candidates.

The EPP political group, to which both NE's MEPs belong, exerts no influence on the process of candidate selection. However, it has been admitted that the EPP is a very useful political resource not only for European, but also national and municipal elections.³⁷² In most cases EPP has been used for the purpose of informational backing, and EPP representatives have participated in NE's general meetings. It is possible that cooperation with the EPP may be extended further, but this far it has not been deemed necessary. No coordination mechanism has been established between the NE and EPP, and little approximation of party programs has been done, but there is almost no evidence that any important ideological disagreements would exist between the NE and EPP. NE defines itself as a national and conservative party, and most of its ideas are in line with those that are represented by EPP. On no occasions NE's representatives in the EP have not been able to vote in accordance with the rest of EPP faction because of the views and positions held by their party. This is a proof that there is almost no disagreement between the NE party and EPP.

For Human Rights in United Latvia (FHRUL)

FHRUL is in reality union of several parties and party groupings. Founders of the FHRUL were radical and left leaning members of the Harmony Centre and Latvian Socialist party. "Free Choice of European Nations" (FCEN/BITE). In May 2007 "For Equal Rights" and FCEN/BITE were united into political party "For Human rights in United Latvia" (FHRUL), that defined themselves as protector of the ethnic Russians interests and cooperated with numerous radical organizations.³⁷³

For the mobilization of the electorate political parties in Latvia, and FHRUL among them, actively used ethnic differentiation. "Russian parties are stigmatized as pro-Moscow parties who act against national interests of Latvia, and it makes ethnic Latvian electorate scary and precarious. During the 2004 European Parliament elections the Human Rights in United Latvia party (FHRUL) ironically used this ethnic cleavage whilst having as their campaign banner "Russians are coming!" It was used in order to have an opposite effect, because the understanding was that there is no possibility to attract ethnic Latvian voters for their agenda. Ethno-political differentiation is more important motivation for Latvian voters than ideological cleavages. It should be noted however, that potential voters also keep Russian factor in their mind, which was skillfully crafted into the controversial campaign banner. The FHRUL banner was actually reaction to the now ill-famous 1998 campaign banner "Don't give up - Latvian!", that (FF/LNIM party used in their campaign against the new draft of the citizenship law. Regardless of ethnic cleavages FHRUL parliamentary performance has pacified its radical leftist wing, and particularly the work of Tatyana Zhdanok (MEP) has made the work of the party more popular.

³⁷² ibid.

³⁷³ To read about the history of the FHRUL party one may access: <http://www.pctvl.lv> Last accessed on internet, 29.01.2009.

The election campaign is transparent and its procedures are outlined in the party rules.³⁷⁴ Territorial party chapters have the right to nominate candidates for the EP elections, and nominated candidates are accepted in the Party Board. After receiving candidates from the territorial chapters it is the Party Board who makes the final amendments. To finalize the electoral list open elections are held with members of the Party Board present. Not only FHRUL members could be nominated. Art. 9.2. stipulate that non-party members may be nominated, and it requires accept of the Party Board with the 2/3 of votes. Prospective candidates must hold professional and language skills, and seniority of the party membership is considered as a bonus.

The cooperation with the European Greens and European Free Alliance (EGEFA) has been fruitful according to Miroslavs Mitrofanovs (MP). Although FHRUL has not signed an official cooperation agreement with EGEFA, according to Mitrofanovs, Tatyana Zhdanok (MEP_EGEFA) has signed individual membership agreement. Cooperation with EGEFA focuses mostly on European environmental and social issues, and such collaboration with EGEFA would be continued also in forthcoming elections. According to M. Mitrofanovs, human resources and information exchange was used both in 2004 and also now in 2009 EP election campaign.

People's Party (PP)

Since its foundation in 1998, PP has become one of the most influential political parties in Latvia. It has positioned itself as a national, conservative and pragmatic political actor, whose vigor lies in strong leadership and regional representation, as well as in its image as the “party of doers”. PP has been present in most coalition governments since 1998 national elections in which it won 21.19% of the popular vote and 24 seats in the parliament. After the initial success, the party managed to win substantial representation in all subsequent national elections. PP gained 20 seats (16.6% of the popular vote) in 2002 and 23 seats (19.56% of the popular vote) in national parliament in 2006 elections.³⁷⁵ PP scored considerably worse in European elections in 2004 when it won only 6.65% of the popular vote, and thus has only one representative in the EP – a former Latvian Foreign affairs minister Rihards Pīks.

The right to nominate candidates for the EP election belongs to party branches, deputies of national parliament, PP's sectoral committees and party's youth organization. There are no formal criteria that candidates need to fulfill in order to be eligible for nomination, but usually it is the case that informal criteria such as adequate education, understanding of the subject area, popularity and language proficiency are deemed important.³⁷⁶ Party's statutes do not prohibit nomination of individuals who are not affiliated to the PP, but it is very unlikely that the party would place someone on the final list of candidates who is not a party member. Although the Congress is the supreme decision-making authority of the party, the final list of candidates is approved by the Board.³⁷⁷ In order to be placed on the final list, nominees do not have to submit a detailed description of their planned activities, a motivation letter or a CV because party

³⁷⁴ FHRUL rules. http://www.pctvl.lv/index.php?lang=lv&mode=party&submode=&page_id=366, Last accessed on internet, 20.01.2009

³⁷⁵ Saeimas vēlēšanu rezultāti (Results of parliamentary elections). Central Election Commission. <http://web.cvk.lv/pub/public/27427.html> Last accessed on internet, 24.01.2009.

³⁷⁶ Interview with PPs member and Parliamentary secretary of the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governments Māris Krastiņš, 16.01.2009.

³⁷⁷ Tautas Partijas Statūti (Statutes of the People's Party). 02.05.1998. <http://www.tp.lv/index.php/ideja/statuti> Last accessed on internet, 27.01.2009.

members know each other quite well, and there is little need for nominees to justify their willingness to become MEPs.

European People's Party (EPP) doesn't exert any influence on the PP's candidate selection process directly, but, in a same way as other major Latvian political parties, the PP values its European ties. EPP is seen as a valuable resource that can be used during the election campaign. This was the case in 2004 when Hans-Gert Pöttering visited Latvia and supported PP's election campaign. Joint seminars on election campaigns have been organized, and PP's members have had the opportunity to have in-service training at the EP. The PP is building upon its MEP's knowledge and experience. R.Pīks has been appointed as a person in charge of PP's 2009 EP election campaign and is responsible for drafting the party program for the upcoming election.³⁷⁸ One of his tasks is to find a balance between general principles and priorities of the EPP and more particular priorities of the PP. In sum, the candidates are selected through a democratic procedure, but it is the function of the party Board to make sure that adequate candidates who stand a chance of being elected are put forward for the EP election. The EPP is seen as a valuable resource, but not as an actor who can and should influence the process of candidate selection.

Latvia's Social Democratic and Workers' Party (LSDWP)

LSDWP is one of the oldest political parties in Latvia, and it was well-represented in parliament in the interwar period (until the coup in 1934). The social democratic movement was restored after Latvia regained independence in 1991, but it was split in factions. Only gradually various factions agreed to work together.³⁷⁹ Social democrats gained 14 seats in parliamentary elections in 1998, but were not politically influential. Despite the success, four years later social democrats didn't reach the 5% threshold and were not represented in parliament. The same scenario recurred in 2006, but despite failures at the last two national elections, LSDWP is represented in Riga City Council which is seen as an important representation.

The procedure of candidate selection for the EP in 2009 is defined by the Board of the LSDWP. This system functions with regard to all elections. The Board sets a date until which regional branches submit their nominees. Not only members of the party can be selected at this stage, but also individuals not associated to any party can be nominated. In preparation to the 2009 EP elections, regional branches and the Board started to nominate candidates in September-October 2008.

The strategy that is chosen by the party for the 2009 elections to the EP anticipates that the Board nominates a single person who would choose his "team" of other candidates from the list of nominees from regional branches. The person who was chosen for this task is Mr. Atis Lejīņš who is a former director of the Latvian Institute of International Affairs (LIIA) – a foreign and security policy think tank. The choice of A.Lejīņš to become the LSDWP's leading figure for the 2009 EP elections has been explained by his foreign and security policy expert credentials, foreign language proficiency and contacts with policy-makers and researchers in Europe and beyond. His candidacy was discussed within the party before the official start of candidate

³⁷⁸ Interview with PPs member and Parliamentary secretary of the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governments Māris Krastiņš, 16.01.2009.

³⁷⁹ LSDWP in its current shape was formed in 1999 when several social democratic parties adopted the decision to merge. LSDWP claims to be the heir of the following political parties: Latvia's Social Democratic Workers Party (founded in 1904), Latvia's Social Democratic Party (founded in 1990), Latgale Democratic Party (founded in 1924), Justice Party (founded in 1995). LSDWP's rules, 2007.

selection process that took off in September 2008. Party nominees would need to have similar credentials, as the party has defined such characteristics as language proficiency, competence in EU issues and ability to blend in the EP setting.

In January 2009, there were approximately 20 names on the list. Once the list is finalized by A.Lejiņš, it has to be accepted by the party Board that can either add extra names to the list or remove some of the candidates that have been chosen by A.Lejiņš. In fact, LSDWP's Foreign secretary Evins Labanovskis was of an opinion that some candidates are very likely to be placed on the list despite the fact that they haven't been nominated by the party branches.³⁸⁰ There are at least two reasons for this tactic. First, political process in Latvia has been turbulent in recent years therefore parties have to be flexible in order to adjust to rapid transformations of political landscape. Second, the Board needs to have room for maneuver because political competition is fierce, and, as the LSDWP is a party that is not represented in parliament, party's representatives fear that its nominees may face unfair treatment from the ruling coalition and may be victimized because of their political affiliation.

LSDWP currently is not represented in the EP, but the party claims that it prepares for the 2009 EP election in close cooperation with the Party of European Socialists (PES). The impact of PES on the process of LSDWP's candidate selection for the EP election is negligible, but the party is glad to have an opportunity to exploit the PES as a political resource. Affiliation with the PES will be used as in several ways. First, cooperation with Estonian and Lithuanian socialist / social democratic parties is very likely. Second, during the election campaign LSDWP will use experience and information accumulated within PES. Third, visits by high-profile PES members are very likely to boost the image of LSDWP as belonging to the European family of social democratic parties.

Although the initial phase of LSDWP's candidate selection is very democratic, the latter process of candidate selection is less democratic because a single person can choose from the initial candidate list and form his "team". The Board of the LSDWP can alter the list by adding or removing candidates. The impact of PES on the candidate selection process is almost nonexistent, but LSDWP is proud to be affiliated with the group of European socialist and social democratic parties. It is useful because of the possibility to draw upon PES's expertise and support. LSDWP considers winning one or two seats in the EP important because that would also be a good way to prevent such Latvian political parties as Harmony Centre from joining the PES political group in the EP. LSDWP has defined itself as social democratic party which stands for national values therefore it would like to prevent Harmony Centre's membership in PES on national/ethnic grounds.

Harmony Centre (HC)

According to the latest public opinion polls, HC is the most popular political party in Latvia.³⁸¹ HC scored well in the last national elections of 2006 and won 17 seats in the parliament (14.42% of the popular vote). However, it is not part of the ruling coalition and thus has limited influence on decision-making process. HC is not a party. It is a union of parties, and, as of today, it is composed of five political parties. It was formed in July 2005, and initially it was a union of three

³⁸⁰ Interview with LSDWP's Foreign secretary Evins Labanovskis, 14.01.2009.

³⁸¹ 2009. gada "Saskaņas Centrs" joprojām ir populārakais politiskais spēks valstī (In 2009 "Harmony Centre" is the most popular political party in the country). HC website.

<http://www.saskanascentrs.lv/index.php?text&id=75&level=1&cid=477&do=news> Last accessed on internet, 30.01.2009.

political parties: National Harmony Party, Party "New Centre, Daugavpils City Party. HC was joined by the Latvian Socialist Party in December 2005. Later, in January 2009, the decision was taken to admit also the Social Democratic Party. Each party that joins HC retains its own internal decision-making structure, but the political union also has several decision-making bodies. The highest decision-making body is the Congress. Then there is the Council that is the main decision-making body of the HC between Congresses of the political union. There is also the HC Board that consists of representatives of all parties forming the political union.³⁸²

Most of the political parties under analysis in this report have started the process of candidate selection for the upcoming EP elections already in the second half of 2008. HC is an exception. Because of the fact that the HC is a union of political parties, the process the process of candidate selection is unwieldy. It was only at the end of January 2009 when member parties of the HC agreed on the principles of how the list of candidates will be composed. It was decided that the principle of parity will be upheld and that each political party will be allowed to put its representatives on the final list of candidates.³⁸³ It means that there are five different ways for selecting HC's nominees. Besides, by the end of January 2009 there was little knowledge about individuals that would be placed on the list by each party. The candidates would first have to be approved by the Board of each party, and only then would decisions be taken at the HC institutions. It is very likely that each party forming the HC is well aware of the potential candidates that it may offer for the EP election, but these have not been confirmed officially, and that is only the first step towards being placed on the HC final list.

HC is not represented in the EP because the National Harmony Party (arguably, the most influential political party in the HC) that participated in 2004 election stopped short of passing the 5% threshold. Despite the fact that HC has no seats in the EP, it has managed to develop contacts with the PES. Interestingly, information on the PES website is contradictory. On the one hand, LSDWP is mentioned as the only social democratic party from Latvia that is member of PES, but, on the other hand, Jānis Urbanovičs who is the leader of the Party "New Centre" is mentioned as the PES contact person in Latvia.³⁸⁴ So, there is evidence that the HC has contacts with European partners. It is evident that Latvian political parties highly value European contacts and try to present themselves as having European credentials. Despite that, it is clear that PES has almost no direct influence on HC's candidate selection process.³⁸⁵ There is enough evidence that candidates are going to be selected according to several informal criteria such as competence, experience and language proficiency. Thus, HC is likely to select candidates that would be able to blend in the EP environment, but otherwise there is no influence from the PES.

Union of Greens and Farmers (UGF)

Union of Greens and Farmers (UGF) was founded prior the parliamentary elections in 2002. UGF is a union of the three parties – Green Party (GP), Latvian Farmers Union (LFU), and the regional Party for Latvia and Ventspils (L&V). Latvian Farmers Union (LFU) is among the two Latvian grand old parties, and until the Soviet occupation in the 1940 LFU played major role in the state building process. Three of the Latvian presidents in the 1918-1940 period were LFU representatives. The last of them, Kārlis Ulmanis orchestrated the *coup d'état* and later appointed

³⁸² Politiskā apvienība „Saskaņas Centrs” (Political Union „Harmony Centre”).

<http://www.saskanascentrs.lv/index.php?text&id=79&level=0> Last accessed on internet, 29.01.2009.

³⁸³ Telephone interview with member of HC faction in the national parliament Sergejs Mirskis, 29.01.2009.

³⁸⁴ Full member parties. PES website. <http://www.pes.org/content/view/43/0/lang.en/> Last accessed on internet, 29.01.2009.

³⁸⁵ Telephone interview with a member of HC faction in the national parliament Sergejs Mirskis, 29.01.2009.

himself as the fourth Latvian president in 1936. LFU was traditionally conservative party, but after resuming its work after the end of the Soviet occupation in February 16, 1991 it became a centre party in order to prevent factionalism among the farmers. During the presidential elections in 1993 LFU nominated the nephew of the self-appointed president, Guntis Ulmanis for the post of the president. With the simple majority vote he was elected the 5th president of Latvia. After the initial parliamentary success the support for LFU gradually declined throughout the late 1990's. In order to regain their influence prior parliamentary elections in 2002 LFU decided to merge with the Green party and form the UGF. This decision proved to be farsighted, because twelve UGF representatives were elected into the Saeima³⁸⁶, nine LFU and three GP members. Green party was founded in 1990, as an offspring of the Environmental movement during the late 1980's. Even though UGF experienced considerable success in 2002 elections, the party was not able to cross the 5% threshold for entering into the EP in 2004. Nevertheless, UGF did well in national elections in 2006 and won second biggest number of seats.

Member of LFU Aleksandrs Kiršteins explained that even though UGF is a union of three parties the nomination process for the EP is really transparent. According to the LZS rules, it is the Central board that nominates the candidates for the EP elections, after the nominees were announced from the regional councils. However, it is the LFU Central Council that approves the final electoral list of candidates.³⁸⁷ Art. No. 6.1 and 6.3 of the Green Party rules explain that those are local party organizations and individual party members who are entitled to nominate candidates for the EP elections. The Green Party board is the institution that later approves the candidates.³⁸⁸ In the regional L&V party it is the party board that nominates the chosen ones. Although the regional L&V might look like a nuisance it exerts inordinate influence within UGF, because the L&V member Gundars Daudze, for example, is the incumbent speaker of the parliament. After all three parties have nominated their candidates, the Union of Greens and Farmers (UGF) board approves the final list of candidates. According to Aleksandrs Kiršteins, elections to the EP are not considered as the paramount event in the Latvian election process, thus the process should be very democratic. UGF plans to cooperate with the Group of the Alliance of the Liberals and Democrats for Europe because this group appeals for the Green party as well as for the liberal branch of the LFU party. Mr Kiršteins envisaged that the only problem with the UGF participation in the EP Liberal Alliance would be dissatisfaction of the conservative wing of the LFU about too liberal position of the Liberal Alliance on rights of sexual minorities. The Green party was accepted into the Federation of European Greens in June 9. 2001.³⁸⁹ Nevertheless, it is believed that the whole process should be truly democratic because there are not only no requirements from their EP Liberal Alliance party group, but also it is considered paramount that local parties decide about their candidates and thus enrich the political discourse of the party group in the EP.

Latvia's First Party / Latvia's Way (LFP/LW)

LFP/LW was formed as a merger of two parties. Latvia's Way was one of the oldest Latvian political parties. It was founded in 1993. LW was particularly successful in its first parliamentary elections, and was one of the major political players up to 2002 when it didn't pass the 5%

³⁸⁶ Saeima is a hundred member Latvian parliament. For more information see: <http://www.saeima.lv> Last accessed on internet, 28.01.2009.

³⁸⁷ Rules of the LZS party. http://www.lzs.lv/?menu_id_s=st42at&sub_m=0 Last accessed on internet, 27.01.2009

³⁸⁸ Rules of the Latvian Green Party. <http://www.zp.lv/info.asp?lv> Last accessed on internet, 10.01.2009

³⁸⁹ Information about the Green party. <http://www.zp.lv/info.asp?lv> Last accessed on internet, 20.01.2009

threshold in parliamentary elections. After this failure there was a period of silence, but two years later LW managed to win enough votes in European elections for one seat. However, Georgs Andrejevs, who was elected to the EP from the LW list, has left the party. In 2005 LW joined forces with LFP which was created in 2002 several months before parliamentary elections. LFP enjoyed a successful start by winning 10 seats in the parliament, but it didn't pass the five percent threshold in the 2004 elections to the European Parliament and is not represented in the EP. After LW joined the LFP in 2005, the new party won the same number of seats in the 2006 parliamentary elections as LFP did four years ago alone. LFP/LW party has been part of the ruling coalition since 2006.

In preparation for the 2009 EP election LFP/LC has adopted a special procedure of candidate selection.³⁹⁰ There is a document that sets out the procedure of how candidates are selected and nominated for the EP election. The candidate selection process is organized in two rounds. Each member of LFP/LW has the right to nominate himself as a candidate. The nominee needs to submit four documents: CV, application letter, a short motivation letter (not exceeding 4000 characters) and a short description on his/her planned activities during the election campaign. Applications had to be submitted to be submitted by 15 October 2008. In parallel, regional branches of the party had the right to suggest any member of the party as a candidate for the EP elections whom they considered as fit for the position of MEP.

Starting from 19 January 2009 all party nominees are placed on LFP/LW website and party members can vote for their nominees and ask questions. Nominees are required to answer all questions and visit those party branches that have expressed an interest in inviting a particular nominee and learning about his/her political views. Although party members are allowed to vote for a particular nominee, these votes do not determine the final composition of the party list. Although the procedures that set the final composition of the party list are still uncertain, it is clear that the list is to be approved during the party congress in mid-March 2009. There is an option that the party list will simply be put for approval during the party congress, but, as one of the goals of the LFP/LW is to capture as much public attention as possible, it is likely that the party general meeting will be staged as a large public event with delegates from party regional branches bringing their votes to the general meeting.³⁹¹ This idea bears some similarities with party conventions in the United States, and this resemblance is intentional. The only intervention of the party board is likely to be rearrangement of the nominees in the final lists in order to place the most popular and most likely to be elected candidates on top of the ballot list.

Although there is almost no impact from European political parties and political groups of the EP on candidate selection process within the LFP/LW, this party is proud of its ties with the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR) which is the contribution of Latvia's Way. LW was a liberal party, and therefore its association with ELDR was quite natural. Graham Watson, the leader of the Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), assisted LW in the run-up to the 2004 EP election by visiting Latvia and participating in LW's election campaign. Interestingly, LFP initially defined itself as a party that defends Christian values, and this may eventually hamper LFP/LW participation in the bloc of European liberal democratic parties despite the fact that leaders of LFP/LW firmly believe that there is no contradiction between their Christian values and liberal democratic stance of ELDR.³⁹² In case there is no

³⁹⁰ Nolikums par partijas LPP/LC deputātu kandidātu izvirzīšanas un apstiprināšanas kārtību Eiropas Parlamenta velešanām. 15.09.2008. (modified on 15.12.2008).

³⁹¹ Interview with Georgs Lansmanis who is a member of LFP/LW and counselor of the Minister of Transportation, 08.01.2009.

³⁹² It is very likely that LFP/LW slogans for the upcoming EP elections will be: family, children and Christian values.

apparent conflict between values that are represented by the ELDR and LFP/LW, cooperation during the 2009 election campaign is possible, but it is very unlikely that the ELDR would have an impact on the process of LFP/LW's candidate selection process.

Party - Society for Political Change (PSCP)

PSCP was founded in September 2008 after two of its most prominent leaders had to leave the People's Party (PP) due to different reasons. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Artis Pabriks left the party disagreeing with the lack of democratic procedures within PP, while the Former Minister of Regional Affairs was excluded from the party *in absentia* due to his pronouncements that did not fall in line with the PP elders. Decision to form a society that later registered as the party was easy, because Latvian political system is still consolidating, and the election law allows two hundred founding members to found a political party. After the governing coalition representatives (PP, UFG, LFP/LW and FF/LNIM) started openly breeching the law, and corruption and state capture was flourishing nascent civil society groups started showing their anxiety, and it somewhat allowed PSCP to increase their support. For example, prior the ominous riots in Riga on January 13, 2009 there was a PSCP organized peaceful demonstration where about 10 000 - 15 000 demonstrators participated, and it allowed PSCP to increase its popularity over other political competitors considerably.³⁹³ PSCP is a center left party that models itself on mixture between the German Christian Democrats and the Swedish Moderates. PSCP has only two members of the parliament now, and the party membership is being built mostly from middle class representatives and young professionals.

While preparing for the 2009 EP and municipal elections PSCP faces certain challenges. The party has only nine local organizations so far with representations in all five electoral regions of Latvia. Therefore, candidate selection for the forthcoming elections was integrated into the process of party foundation in September 2008. Prospective members were asked to fill out application forms and tick in subsequent choice, either they wanted to be nominated for parliamentary or EP elections. After collecting that data it is the caucus of the party, after recommendations from the Party Board that decides about the acceptance of the prospective candidates based on their CV's and interviews. The Party Board adds the last touch to the party lists.³⁹⁴ According to another member of the PSCP board Gundars Romanovskis the candidate nomination is finished already and party lists would be ready by the time party congress convenes in March 2009.³⁹⁵

PSCP proclaims itself as socially responsible centre party, thus while it supports bigger role of the government in state affairs and turning away from extreme liberalism, it does not support social democratic ideal of proportional taxation. According to party program one of the major goals of PSCP is to reintroduce values of European political culture in Latvian political realm. For example PSCP wants to introduce the system of political parties being funded from the state budget, because Latvia is the only country in the EU where such system does not exist. Therefore the party keeps close contacts with the Group of the European People's Party and European Democrats (EPP/ED). According to Artis Pabriks, personal contacts between EPP/ED politicians helped PSCP to receive ideational support in organizing the party.³⁹⁶ Also Gundars

³⁹³ One may see on p.5 the Table 2 that the increase of PSCP support has jumped by 1,2 percent, while all the other party popularity, except FHRUL, has declined between December 2008 until January 2009.

³⁹⁴ PSCP rules. <http://www.scp.lv/lv/par-mums/488/>, Last accessed on internet, 15.01.2009

³⁹⁵ Interview with Gundars Romanovskis, 17.12.2008

³⁹⁶ Interview with Artis Pabriks, 05.01.2009

Romanovskis, who is currently aid for Georgs Andrejevs (MEP-Alliance of Liberals) but simultaneously election campaign organizer for the EP elections, underlined that EPP/ED does not have other influence over the work of the party except the ideational support.

Civic Union (CU)

The Civic Union, similarly to the previously described PSPC, was created when prominent members of the New Era party, or the so called "professors group", split off in early 2008 and together with the two MEP's, who left Fatherland Freedom (FF/LNIM), founded the conservative party Civic Union (CU). Two major leaders of the party are Girts Valdis Kristovskis (MEP) and former Commissioner of the European Commission Sandra Kalniete. Differently from other conservative right wing parties founders of the CU underline that their strength stems from its decentralized structure. The CU is well represented in all Latvian regions, and similarly to PSPC the CU supports europeanization of the post-Soviet political culture. The CU backs introduction of the system of funding political parties from the state budget, thus curbing inordinate influence of the Latvian "oligarchic" families.

The rules of the CU are transparent and preparation for the 2009 EP elections started already in the late autumn of 2008. The major emphasis for candidate selection is on their professionalism according to Sandra Kalniete.³⁹⁷ The CU rules state that the Party Board and every chapter of the party has the right to nominate their candidates. It is paramount that those candidates are well versed about the basic mechanisms and policies of the EU. Also professional skills, knowledge of foreign languages, and their popularity is weighed in the selection process. The election campaign organizers usually draw up the list after nominations are presented, where the candidates are weighed according to the special system designed for that purpose. Art. 4.5.6. outlines the mechanism where the party caucus determines procedure of candidate selection for the EP elections, and later the party caucus must accept the list of candidates that was prepared by the Party Board.³⁹⁸ According to S.Kalniete, the process of candidate selection is ongoing and should be finalized by February 15. S.Kalniete underlined that, while the CU has developed constructive cooperation with the Union for Europe and Nations Group in the European Parliament, UEN does not exert any influence in the candidate selection process. Personal contacts of both leaders of the party as well as other present MP's and MEP's in the European Parliament allow the CU to receive the ideational support that is much needed in the forthcoming election campaign.

Conclusions

Latvian Election Law stipulates that rules and procedures on candidate nomination for municipal, national or European election must be included in party rules. While analyzing rules of the ten abovementioned parties, the authors came to the conclusion that the rules are transparent and democratic. Basically, the initial phase of nominations is democratic, but the selection process of the final party lists takes place within narrow circle of party board members. Due to the nature of the political process in Latvia some rules give disproportionate power to the party boards. Still, those are party boards that, with few exceptions, choose final candidates. In order to keep party leaders accountable, it is important that rank and file members participate in party work actively. It is easier for political leaders to cooperate with the European sister parties

³⁹⁷ Interview with Sandra Kalniete, 20.01.2009

³⁹⁸ CU party rules. <http://pilsoniska-savieniba.lv/?s=1225757073&ln=lv> Last accessed on internet, 29.01.2009

if conditions of mutual trust between rank and file members and the party leadership have been established.

With regard to the impact of the EP political groups upon the process of candidate selection and nomination the authors conclude that the impact is negligible. However, the abovementioned parties consider affiliation to the EP political groups as important. Almost all interviewed emphasized assistance already received or anticipated as a very important political resource. When choosing among potential candidates, parties routinely assess their European credentials, language skills and ability to adapt to the multicultural environment of the EP. So, there is considerable indirect political influence of the EP political groups on Latvian political parties.

The indirect influence probably explains the slow europeanization process of Latvian political culture. Now this process is challenged by a sharp downturn in Latvian economy. Incumbent parties are facing self-inflicted challenges because of economic and political turmoil in Latvia that has resulted also in crisis of political trust. Such situation is explosive, and the first signs of precariousness of such situation one could witness on the streets of Riga on January 13, 2009. After peaceful demonstration demanding sacking of the parliament riots followed. The following day on January 14, 2009 the president presented parliament and government with a list of tasks to be accomplished by the March 31, 2009. PP, which is the biggest coalition party, suddenly announced that it would like to sack the parliament and organize early election as soon as possible. In early 2009 triple elections seemed very likely, and it was quite probable that early parliamentary elections would take place either on June 6 together with municipal and the EP elections, or in September 2009. Under such a scenario national elections would have been of paramount importance for the political parties, and the EP elections would have been downgraded to a status of "third rate elections." However, this hasn't happened, and national elections are scheduled for early October 2009 because incumbent parties have managed to form a new government in Spring 2009. Thus, Latvia will hold "only" twin elections - European Parliament and municipal - in June 2009.

HUNGARY

The chapter will be presented in three subsections. First, those elements of the political and legal framework will be introduced that have an impact on or even determine the candidate selection process. Second, the concrete mechanisms, procedures and outcomes of candidate selection will be analyzed in each relevant party. In the conclusion the party cases will be placed in a comparative framework, and some overarching patterns and general trends will be identified. In this concluding section an attempt will be made to determine the level of institutionalization and the impact of different actors – both national and international – in the selection of European Parliament candidates.

Introduction: political context and legal framework

The political context

In order to be able to present a relevant analysis we have to put the preparation to the EP elections, most importantly the selection of candidates, into the current political systemic context. At the time of finalizing this analysis the EP candidate lists are still not fully blown and as the parties claim, the campaign itself will start only in May. Clearly, the impression can be justified that the EP elections have a low profile. The former – and for Hungarians the first – 2004 EP elections were largely fought on national issues. The then four parliamentary parties (MSZP, Magyar Szocialista Párt -Socialists; Fidesz , Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége-Magyar Polgári Szövetség – Young Democrats; SzDSz, Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége – Liberals; and MDF, Magyar Demokrata Fórum - Forum) were not particularly interested in EU affairs, some of them did not even prepare party programmes addressing exclusively the EP elections (Euromanifestos), although all of them addressed the elections in different party documents. Paradoxically, Fidesz – assumedly a Eurosceptic party – prepared the most substantial Euromaniesto while neither MSzP nor the Liberal SzDSz (the governing coalition partners at that time) published a document, which could be labelled as a Euromaniesto. The fourth parliamentary party, MDF, Forum published a Euromaniesto but regarding its complexity and content it can be classified rather as a leaflet than a programme. Still, the 2004 turnout was not especially low (38,5%), at least by CEE regional standards.

Five years later it seems that neither the parties nor the public are attracted by European issues, or the EP elections in particular. This is largely due to the political and economic crisis that prevails in Hungary since 2008, Spring. At that time, after an extended period of government inefficiency the Socialist -Liberal coalition broke up, and the MSzP, Socialists had to govern in minority position since after May 1. Government inefficiency continued and the world financial and then economic crisis only deepened the internal economic problems. Despite the financial aid from the IMF and the EU the authority of the government and particularly that of the PM and Socialist Party leader became so heavily undermined that the Prime Minister first stepped down from the Socialist Party's leadership position in March and shortly afterwards also from the post of the head of the government.

Eventually, on the basis of an agreement between the MSzP, Socialists and SzDSz, Liberals (the “old” coalition allies) a new government was put in place on April 14, which can be partially considered as a government of experts due to its non-partisan members while it also has some,

exclusively Socialist ministers from the old government as well. Only one year before the regular national election this move expressed that the Socialists and the Liberals wanted to avoid early elections by all means because their popularity sank to unprecedently low levels. For some time the opposition parties – supported by some comments of the Head of State – even hinted at the possibility that national elections should be held in parallel (on the same day) with the EP elections.

This political environment is important from our (EP candidate selection) perspective for the following reasons (although we shall see later that other partisan and national political reasons will also have a major impact):

- attention has focused on highly significant internal political issues when the EP candidate selection and altogether EU issues should have already been on the agenda. This explains why the EP candidate lists are not yet ready with each party, why possibly some parties will not produce a Euro-manifesto at this occasion – similarly to 2004.
- in face of their growing unpopularity the two old governing parties, the MSzP Socialists and the SzDSz, Liberals rightly fear that they will suffer serious losses at the European Parliament elections. As it has been widely documented in terms of the experiences of the old member states the EP elections are largely fought on national issues. This can be expected in Hungary more than ever. Severe losses might imply that the position of well embedded and successful MEPs from the Socialists will be endangered. Indeed this might lead to a paradoxical situation: while the EP election might well bring forward a low-key campaign the candidate selection could be very intense – particularly in the parties which are threatened by severe losses.
- the intensity of candidate selection could grow on the opposition side as well: out of the opposition parties it is only the largest, the Fidesz that can be sure to be able to maintain (and possibly increase) its presence in the European Parliament. In the small opposition party MDF, Forum EP candidate selection might also appear as a (political) life or death issue.

Indirectly we can also assume that this political context will increase the importance of national actors and national considerations – either political or personal – and the influence of external (European) actors will diminish in face of the internal, national problems.

All in all, we can conclude that European Parliament elections take place amongst rather unfortunate political conditions, where party hostilities go hand in hand with growing public discontent amongst worsening economic conditions.

The legal framework – the law on the EP election

Since there is no uniform procedure of election defined by European regulation, the legal framework of the European Parliamentary elections is set by the national legislation. Nonetheless, national regulations are complemented by the agreements of the EU Member States that specify that MEPs should be elected by direct universal suffrage.

The Hungarian electoral system for the European Parliament elections is governed by the Constitution, by Act No. C. of 1997 on the Electoral procedure and by the Act No. CXIII. of 2003 on the Election of members of the European Parliament. At the time of the 2009 elections Hungary has 22 seats in the European Parliament (while in 2004 Hungary had 24 mandates) which are distributed using a proportional system according to the D'Hondt method. The voters can vote on national party list, thus the country is regarded as one constituency. There is no preferential voting, lists are closed. For winning a mandate on a party list the number of votes

registered for the list should exceed 5%. At the 2004 elections all the 4 (parliamentary) parties managed to exceed the threshold. At that time 9 parties managed to submit an official list but no other party reached the 5% threshold.

All voters have the right to stand for election and thus to be nominated on a party lists. There is no national regulation concerning gender or other quotas, parties are free in the nomination process. Regarding incompatibilities, there is no restriction on holding multiple mandates (eg. in national and in the European Parliament), still in 2004 the mayor of Budapest who got a mandate on the SzDSz, Liberals EP list had to step back from the EP mandate after a decision of the National Public Administration Office. In order to submit a list, the parties need to collect 20 000 voters' endorsements, that is nomination slips. The party lists should be submitted to the National Election Office 30 days prior the voting day. This partially explains why there are no set lists at the end of April. The voting day is set by the President of Hungary who when choosing the date should respect the time period set by the EU. The 2009 elections will be held on 7th June, 2009. Voting is not compulsory in Hungary (as mentioned above, in 2004 participation rate was 38,5%).

Party procedures and the politics of candidate selections

In this section the candidate selection strategies of the individual parties will be introduced. To get an overview, the following table indicates the current placement of the Hungarian parties in the EP.

European Party	National Party	no. of MEPs in the European Party group
EPP-ED	Fidesz	12
	MDF	1
PES	MSzP	9

Table 1 Current size of the Hungarian party delegations in the European Parliament

The table demonstrates that Hungarian MEPs are represented in three party groups only. Their composition in the EPP-ED is particular not only because two national parties (Fidesz and MDF) appear in it but also because the Fidesz group includes one MEP from the KDNP, Christian Democratic People's Party in Hungary. At the time of the 2004 EP elections the KDNP was not a national parliamentary force thus the Fidesz EP candidate list contained KDNP candidates as well. Since then, as a result of the 2006 national elections KDNP got seats in the national parliament but as we shall see below they do not run a separate list at this occasion either: the KDNP candidate – in fact the "old" MEP is integrated on the Fidesz EP list.

We shall begin the discussion with three small parties, followed by the two big ones. Two small parties, the MDF, Forum and the SzDSz, Liberals are struggling for survival on the national level. Thus it remains a challenging question how do they pursue the EP candidate selection process, are the European Parliament elections regarded as a jumping board, as a way of "political recovery" or political repositioning of the party, what is the role of the selected candidates in this process, and after all do they seem to be successful in their attempts at this early stage (indeed the zero-stage) of the EP campaign? The third small – non-parliamentary – party (Jobbik, The Right Way), will be included due to the particular position of the party: a relative newcomer on the radical right, still with a fair chance to get a European mandate.

MDF, Hungarian Democratic Forum

The Party Statute clarifies the selection process of MEPs: it is the National Presidium (a 11 member body) that prepares the list of the EP candidate list and presents it to the National Council (a 101 member body) which eventually casts one vote on the whole list and is not entitled to change the rank order of the candidates. This seems to be a centralized process. The National Council contains basically the regional delegates, representative(s) from the parliamentary party group, and the National Presidium. Thus, to use a political science term both the rank and file external party and the parliamentary party group play a role in the National Council but the Presidium takes the lead.

The centralized nature of the selection process became significant for several reasons. The support base of the MDF has been diminishing for some time and lately even the existence of the parliamentary party group (PPG) has been under challenge. The MDF painfully tries to play the role of a balance weight between the MSzP, Socialists and the Fidesz, claiming that they are the true Conservatives who do not give in either to left or right wing populism, allegedly one reason for the crisis of the Hungarian economy. This orientation of the MDF leadership does not necessarily correspond to the opinion of the members – belonging to a more moderate, socially sensitive, or Christian Democratic trend. Under these conditions the EP candidate selection process became the focus point of a dual crisis: leadership versus membership, and a reorientation of the party programme.

To the astonishment of the members, and the National Council (although due to a leak the information appeared *one day before* the event) the Presidium nominated Lajos Bokros and György Habsburg to the two top positions. Bokros was – among his other positions – the finance minister of the Socialist-Liberal government in the middle of the 1990s and introduced the most serious austerity measures then, since after systemic change. The second position has been offered to György Habsburg, the son Ottó von Habsburg, who used to serve in the EP. Both candidates are internationally known and respected – although for different reasons.

The National Council was highly divided on the nomination. The serving MEP of the party has not been properly informed, moreover he is regarded particularly by the regional leadership groups a successful MEP, serving in the interest of the Hungarian agriculture, environmental issues etc. Eventually the vote of the National Council brought a very close, 48:44 result for the submitted list with 2 abstaining. The nomination of the two list leaders is a clear turn in the MDF's political orientation, and embodies attempt to re-position the party politically and possibly to attract voters with the strong and well known candidates. Nevertheless, the immediate effect proved to be fatal. Not only has the deselected MEP left the party but some groups from the regional strongholds also decided to leave, moreover the defection of an MP from the MDF PPG resulted in the dissolution of the PPG itself. According to the Standing Orders of the Hungarian Parliament at least 10 MPs are necessary to form a PPG. The dissolution of the parliamentary party group is a serious blow – although the party leader and her close allies hope that success (that is at least on mandate) at the EP elections will justify the selection – and the political reorientation.

The National Party Congress will meet shortly after the EP elections (on June 13) where the evaluation of the elections and a confidence vote on the party leadership (not unrelated to each other, of course) are scheduled. For the time being the EP list of the party is not filled up yet. Only 10 names became public, but they do not yet officially appear on the home page of the

National Election Committee or on the home-page of the MDF itself. At this stage we have to emphasize again that the deadline for submitting the final list of candidates to the National Election Committee is May 8. In addition to the two “top candidates” that the party Presidium put forward the other 8 names include the party leader (I. Dávid, placed 5th) and party members with no particularly strong political but rather expertise profile. In face of the party’s low level of popularity it must be noted that it is only the top of the list that does matter.

SZDSZ, Liberals

The Liberals also face a critical voting at the EP elections because the survival of the party can be at stake. According to some opinion polls, the party, which sent 2 MEPs to the European Parliament in 2004, has lost its voters and cannot reach the 5% threshold as of now. As a result the list submitted for the EP elections can be considered as an attempt to answer the political crisis and to strengthen voters’ support. The nomination process was carried out in two phases: in the first phase, the first 4 seats on the lists were distributed while in the second phase (end of April) the rest of the list was presented. Concerning the process, there is no official information about its rules because the Party Statute does not contain any guidelines on this matter and there are no other publicly available party documents that indicate the process of nomination. According to media news and internal information the National Council of the party has the right to vote about the proposed list, which is enforced by the fact that the names of nominees became public after the Council’s meeting. Still we know that it is the party’s Presidium that has prepared the list.

The first part of the list was published in early February following the meeting of the National Council. As the party struggles to reach the threshold, most attention has been drawn to the list leader who came as no surprise: István Szent-Iványi, current MEP sitting with the liberals is the first name on the party list. He is an important figure in the party, he has been chairman of the parliamentary party group twice, in 1997-1998 and in 2000-2002. Szent-Iványi also has a strong European background because in 2003-2004 he was an observer in the European Parliament and in 2004 he became a MEP.

While the first name was expected, the second name on the list is not a newcomer either: Gabriella Béki, who was the fourth on the list in 2004, became nominated second right now. She has been very active in the political sphere: she has been member of the national Parliament since 1990, she is a founding member of the Liberal Party where she was president of the National Council between 1998 and 2003 and she was member of the party Presidium several times. The third place on the list is taken by Gábor Demszky who resigned from its MEP status in October, 2004 due to incompatibility reasons being the mayor of Budapest. Demszky can also be considered a strong figure in the political sphere, but his position on the list will not take him to Brussels. The fourth place on the list was assigned to Viktória Mohácsi, current MEP of the Liberal Party. Her nomination highlights the non-institutionalized and informal way of nominating candidates because the fourth place seemed to take Mohácsi by surprise. Indeed, she was so unsatisfied with her position that finally she resigned from the list and her place was taken by József Ignácz, SZDSZ mayor of a town near Budapest. We cannot be sure about the next move in this respect because Mohácsi, MEP in an interview hinted at the problem that Hungary missed to apply the EU directive concerning EP elections, namely that individuals and civic organizations – and not only parties – can run candidates. She might consider running as an independent to support “European Roma strategy and Roma integration”, as she claimed in an interview.

Finally, the fifth candidate is György Konrád, an internationally well-known Hungarian writer, ex-president of the PEN-Club. According to the party leader the nomination of Konrád is merely symbolic and its only objective is party-endorsement. It is clearly set that Konrád would not be willing to become a MEP (he stated that he would not work for Brussels, he just would like to show that he believes in the liberal values supported by the SZDSZ), thus nominating him is a message to and an attempt to regain liberal voters.

The second phase of the nomination process took place in the last days of April and the published names point to a legitimizing nomination strategy: the candidates are symbolic figures of the Hungarian liberal tradition whose support for the party can help attract liberal voters. According to opinion polls the party is expected to win 0-1 mandates, while the party itself expects 2 seats, so the most critical figures in the process are both strong figures: Szent-Iványi is strong both inside the Hungarian party and outside in the EP, while Gabriella Béki also has a strong party-background. To sum up it seems that for the Liberals, the evaluation of the current MEPs' work hasn't been institutionalized and the nominations seem to respond to the internal crisis the party faces.

Jobbik, The Right Way

A short introduction of this party is appropriate for a practical reason and might become appropriate for a political reason as well. At the 2004 EP elections in addition to the then parliamentary parties a non-parliamentary party, MIÉP, Party of Hungarian Justice and Life, a radical right anti-EU party got 2.35% of the vote. This was not enough to get a EP mandate but raises the practical question about the present situation. Indeed, the MIÉP runs a list in 2009 as well, but its popularity is low, the party is hardly visible while its ex-ally, Jobbik, The Right Way is becoming increasingly popular and might well be successful at the EP elections (it performed well in some recent local by-elections). Jobbik did not run a list at the 2004 EP elections because, as they claim, they oppose the very existence of the Union. The two parties, MIÉP and Jobbik acted as allies in the 2006 national elections, although their joint effort was not enough to get into the national parliament. After the failure due to some internal (mainly financial) controversies the coalition of the two parties split, and they began to follow two different ways: MIÉP is losing grounds while Jobbik is active, popular among the younger generations, and willing to participate, moreover to initiate militant actions. They have a clear anti-EU platform.

The party is highly centralized and leadership oriented. It is important to note that they are the first and at the time of finalizing this analysis the only party who has placed its list (a full list with 24! names) on the official site of the National Electoral Commission, that is they are the first party that was able to collect and present the necessary 20 thousand nomination slips to the National Electoral Commission. The EP candidate selection process in the party is not transparent and is not institutionalized. The list leader is K. Morvai, who paradoxically used to be a human rights activist, a feminist activist, the representative of Hungary in the CEDAW Commission of the UN, and a professor of law at one of the leading universities of Hungary. The others on the list come from the party ranks, and there are a few who come from other parties that lost their position in the consolidation and party bipolarization process.

Although Jobbik, The Right Way did not run in 2004 we can expect that they will gain a mandate particularly in face of the fact that fringe parties (amongst relatively low turnout conditions) tend to have good electoral chances at the European level.

The MSzP, Socialists

It is possibly the Socialist Party that has produced the most structured selection process and the influence of the European Party can also be well observed. Formally, it is the highest – or rather the widest – party organ, that is the Party Congress (comprising delegates from all over the country) that is entitled to decide on the party's European list – prepared jointly by the National Council and the Presidium. Still it is the Presidium that makes the first move that is, it prepares the suggestion. The National Council is entitled to evaluate the working/ performance of the parties' MEPs, in which process it also consults the European Socialist Party. As a concrete example, we can refer to the event when the leaders of the National Council and regional party presidents met MEPs and PES representatives (including its leader, Rasmussen) in the EP in Brussels on February 21 - to discuss among other things the EP campaign. The impact of European performance and more importantly support was a major explanatory factor in the selection of candidates.

The Socialist party statute also prescribes the creation of an Election committee concerning the EP elections. This committee includes the party leader and vice leaders, the head of the National Council, the PPG leader, the party treasurer, the party manager, the campaign manager, and leader of the European delegation. Further members can be added to the list by the suggestion of the Presidium and elected by the National Council. Although the formal party statute admits a somewhat elevated role of the Presidium in the selection process, in reality this role seems to be even higher. At least in deciding the top position the party leader in person had the first and final say.

The National Council (including 135 members) on February 27 – with a unanimous vote decided on the list leader (Göncz, K.) and also the three leading female candidates have been named (in addition to Göncz, K., Gurmai, Z., and Herczog E.). Several options, suggestions cc. ranking of the 2-11 positions and the 12-66 positions emerged at that time. Simon, G. the president of the National Council at the same occasion announced that the National Council and the Presidium will place a joint proposal to Party Congress about the EP list, which will be finally accepted by the delegates there. This is what eventually happened on April 21. To put this into context we have to note that at this occasion the leader/Prime Minister unexpectedly resigned from his Prime ministerial position, thus the vote on the on the EP list was almost a non-issue amongst these conditions.

The seemingly smooth nomination/selection process has been absorbed by a politically troubled period, the party leadership and then the government crisis has swept it off the agenda. There is a sharp contrast between the activity of the MEPs on the one hand (they via diverse activities back at home seek to justify their re-selection) and the paralysis of the party on the other hand in this matter, which can focus only on the new government formation and crisis management. Eventually, the Socialist list includes 66 names, that is the party used the full possibility available. The 9 member Socialist EP delegation will certainly shrink according to opinion polls and on the basis of the governing failure and the political troubles of the party during the past years. Thus the selection process has to be evaluated from two perspectives. First, political realism suggests that the first 6 positions could be winning positions the most. With the exception of the list leader, K. Göncz, foreign minister of the Socialist government (and daughter of the first Head of State of the new democratic republic between 1990 and 2000, Á. Göncz) the others are all members of the party's European delegation. The other perspective however is that if we count the current, that is nine posts, three new candidates appear: the list leader, Göncz as already mentioned, and two politically and personally equally well placed party experts. Gy. Cserey is only 33, has been the Socialists' international party secretary since early 2008, she

served as the expert of party's EP delegation's vice-president and is a leader of the "Progressive Platform" in the party. The third new candidate M. Kökény is more experienced, had diverse party posts, served in the national parliament and as cabinet minister in two governments.

In face of the new nominations (even if for the latter two candidates the places possibly do not represent winnable positions) it is appropriate to quote Herczog, Edit - member of the Party Presidium and MEP - who at a public meeting declared that „the Socialist Party would not send *frayed* politicians to Brussels but politicians whose aim is to acquire a majority for the expert based standpoint represented by them”. She also claimed that Göncz, the list leader will be in charge of the free flow of labour and building a social Europe. This statement reflects the selection criteria formulated by top party leaders – but it also reveals that a national top party position is one of the most significant safeguards to have a safe and winning position on the list.

In addition to the institutionalized party procedures different party units try to exert influence in favour of certain candidates. For example, the conference of the MSzP Female Branch at its February 15 meeting reelected Gurmai, Z. as its President and suggested that she become the EP list leader and that Herczog, E. also get a winnable position on the list. European parties also exert some influence. Gurmai's nomination and election to the post of gender equality member of the shadow cabinet of the French Socialist Party can be an example.

We can conclude that the selected should stand on several grounds: European resources (both former performance and appraisal by the European Party) will help reselection. Also, national resources (a place in the party hierarchy or support of party units, let it be local/regional or issue-oriented units) would serve reselection. Also we can observe conscious attempts to strengthen expertise background and accept "external opinion". At the same time, however informality and adverse political decisions also play a role.

FIDESZ

The recruitment and the nomination process of the Fidesz is seemingly one of the most formalized ones. The party statute regulates the process of nomination: based on the initiative of the party leader a Consultative Committee is formed whose task is to propose a list of candidates for the elections, including the EP elections.

The members of the Consultative Committee are the following: the leader of the party, the leader of the Fidesz parliamentary party group, the leader of the National Council, the campaign leader, one delegate from the National Presidium, two delegates from the National Council and the leader of the Fidesz EP delegation. The Committee's meetings are conducted and presided by the party leader. The proposed list is presented to the National Council, which votes on its acceptance. In case the list is rejected, it is the task of the Consultative Committee to propose a new one. The procedure of nomination is closed and centralized: closed, because the different local branches do not have an institutionalised role in proposing candidates and centralized because a small group of leaders, the Committee and the party leader seem to have the most decisive power. The formal structure thus hides a great deal of informal element: the discussions within the committee headed by the party leader. The other forums of selection are not institutionalised either: there are no formal hearings conducted with the MEPs to evaluate their activities, there are no formalised channels of communication with different groups of the party or local branches. On the other hand there are many opportunities for informal discussions since party MEPs quite often attend different party events. As in most parties, the Fidesz MEPs also try to become visible at home: they frequently update their webpages, they publish newsletters

and appear in different public events (conferences, hearings). The successful MEPs also try to play an intermediary role between Fidesz and its European party, the ENP-ED since they count on the support of the ENP-ED to back up their nomination on the European list.

The list presented to the 2009 EP elections suggests that the current MEPs indeed had a good lobby force as among the first 11 candidates on the list there are 9 incumbent MEPs. Looking at their political careers it is clear that all of them succeeded in building a strong political background and possess political capital - although very different ones. Some of them are well-known and respected figures in the party like the leader of the list, Pál Schmitt or József Szájer who both have been vice-presidents of Fidesz before. On the other hand others have gathered much of their political capital in Brussels, like Kinga Gál who was selected "MEP of the year" in 2008, and still others gathered very specific competences and experiences as Lívia Járóka representing the Roma minority. In a sense these politicians are also "self-made men/women" who managed to build a successful career on the European level.

While individual success is certainly important, a strong party background is also essential for getting selected. In the first half of the list (first 11 out of the possible 22 mandates) there are only two newcomers who are actually not at all new: both János Áder and Tamás Deutsch have a very long political history within Fidesz. János Áder was the Speaker of Parliament during the Fidesz government (1998-2002), and then became the leader of the parliamentary party group while in opposition. Tamás Deutsch was Minister for Youth and Sports during the Fidesz government. The fact that they have fairly top positions on the list points to the fact that a strong position in the party can be converted into good EP list positions. The EP list is still a party affair. It has to be mentioned though that the motivations behind their nomination are not crystal clear. It seems that both of them use the European Parliament as an exit door from internal politics.

The second part of the list (last 11 out of 22) shows a more mixed picture: most of the candidates have been working in and/or around the party like Ágnes Hankiss (placed 13th) who worked in the Fidesz government in 1998 or Enikő Győri who was ambassador in Rome during this period. Nevertheless, strong party affiliation is not always visible, Ádám Kósa (placed 12nd) emphasized several times that he is not going to represent party interests in Brussels but wants to be the representative of people living with disabilities.

Concerning the selection criteria it is hard to establish clear requirements based on the candidates: while most of them have been working in international environments (either as politicians or in their original professions), the two newcomers in the first part of the list are lacking international experiences. The candidates are coming from various professional and educational background: although they all have a higher education degree, some of them come from politics, others from the civil sphere or academia. In terms of gender or age balance, no quota was applied, still we can find 7 female candidates and many young ones on the full list. However, if we look at the first half of the list (possibly the winner positions - although the success rate is hard to foretell) there are substantially fewer women and young politicians: out of the first 15 there are only 4 women and the candidate with apparent support from Fidelitas, the young section of Fidesz is placed last on the list.

Within the selection process of the Fidesz candidates the influence of KDNP as a small ally needs to be mentioned. KDNP, the Christian-Democratic party didn't propose an EP list on his own either in 2004 or in 2009. KDNP places its candidates on the Fidesz list, although officially the list does not represent a kind of electoral coalition list, it is only presented by Fidesz. The Fidesz - KDNP relations are understated in the EP context: there was not much media-coverage

about the cooperation of KDNP and Fidesz concerning the EP elections and the only information that reaches the public is that László Surján, current MEP, former president of KDNP is placed 5th on the list. Looking at his website, we can see that it follows the Fidesz scheme and structure. Clearly, the KDNP is not promoted on the European level. This thesis is supported by the fact that the other KDNP candidate, György Hölvényi is placed 16th on the list.

Besides looking at the selected it is important to revisit the deselected MEPs. In the Fidesz EP group there are very few who have not been renominated: Etelka Pataki Barsiné decided not to run again for personal reasons so in this sense she was not deselected. De Blasio Antonio occupied the place of István Pálfi after his death, so he got into the European Parliament as a substitute in the first place. It is thus only Zsolt Becsey who was not renominated despite of his intentions. The party explanation is that he is needed back at home as a potential candidate for a cabinet position in the next Fidesz government. As it was mentioned in the first part of the paper, Fidesz has a more than good chance to win the next national election in Hungary. If Becsey is really going to win a cabinet portfolio, this will be the first occasion when we can observe a career tendency between the national and the European levels visible for some time in the old member states, that is a “way back” to national politics.

To sum it up, in Fidesz the selection seems to favour those in power and the incumbents which can only be overridden by party interests. The party interests are hard to track but the nomination strategy suggests that while they respect the existing European careers, the party also uses the European Parliament as an exit for those leaving national-level politics while also recruits newcomers from adjacent arenas to appeal to different groups of voters.

Conclusions: general trends and ruling patterns

The assumptions that have been formulated in the first section of the paper have proved to be true on the basis of the analysis. The impact of the national political context has been predominant, the small parties have used the candidate selection process for their own political repositioning and revitalization, and in parties under more electoral stress we could observe a higher level of competition and also more intense candidate selection than in those that can feel safe in terms of electoral performance.

Initially, we tried to use formal methods and focused on formal regulations, but this approach would not take us far in the exploration of political reality. Party statutes are either silent about the candidate selection process to the EP, or even when they seem to be explicit they do not go deep thus political reality clearly overwrites or at least influences the written rules.

We have found that the candidates/potential candidates and the parties tend to behave under different logic. Currently sitting MEPs began a more intensive working period back at home already in the Autumn period, they strengthened their support base etc. while the party, that is the leading party organs, responsible for the selection began to focus on the process only at the beginning of this year. From the individuals' perspective this was a tough period – occasionally with unexpected surprises.

With the exception of the Fidesz, which feels comfortable with its high level popularity, in each party we have found deselected or at least misplaced (lower placed) candidates who were unsatisfied not only with result but also with the process itself claiming that their work has not been properly evaluated, and the selection criteria were not clear and transparent. In the two

small parties this situation even led to political turmoil: more spectacular in the MDF with the resignation of the party's MEP and followed by the dissolution of the parliamentary party group in the national parliament but also dramatic in the SzDSz where the MEP did not accept her placement and quit the list altogether. We have not come across with any formal/written evaluation of the MEPs and new candidates. Obviously informal talks on the highest party level were the most important forums that initiated the selection process. In the MSzP, Socialist Party each member of the Presidium and the regional party leaders have been asked to prepare their own list, which have been then compared and merged informally by the party leaders in a non-transparent way.

The following table summarizes who has been selected from current MPs.

Name of MEP	Hungarian Party	Selected/ Deselected	Winning position*	Party member ?	European Party
Barsy-Pataki Etelka	Fidesz	Deselected	na	yes	EPP-ED
Becsey Zsolt	Fidesz	Deselected	na	yes	EPP-ED
Gál Kinga	Fidesz	Selected 3.	yes	not	EPP-ED
Glattfelder Béla	Fidesz	Selected 11.	yes	yes	EPP-ED
Gyürk András	Fidesz	Selected 9.	yes	yes	EPP-ED
Járóka Lívia	Fidesz	Selected 7.	yes	yes	EPP-ED
Óry Csaba	Fidesz	Selected 10.	yes	yes	EPP-ED
Schöpflin György	Fidesz	Selected 8.	yes	not	EPP-ED
Schmitt Pál, member of the Bureau	Fidesz	Selected 1.	yes	yes	EPP-ED
Surján László, member of the Bureau	Fidesz-KDNP	Selected 5.	yes	yes	EPP-ED
Szájer József, vice-chairman, head of delegation	Fidesz	Selected 2.	yes	yes	EPP-ED
Olajos Péter	MDF	Deselected	na	Left the party	EPP-ED
Dobolyi Alexandra	MSzP	Selected 10.	no	yes	PES
Fazakas Szabolcs, questor	MSzP	Selected 6.	yes	yes	PES
Gurmai Zita	MSzP	Selected 3.	yes	yes	PES
Harangozó Gábor	MSzP	Selected 9.	no	yes	PES
Hegyi Gyula	MSzP	Selected 5.	yes	yes	PES
Herczog Edit	MSzP	Selected 2.	yes	yes	PES
Kósáné Kovács Magda	MSzP	Deselected	na	yes	PES
Lévai Katalin	MSzP	Selected 11.	no	not	PES
Tabajdi Csaba, head of delegation	MSzP	Selected 4.	yes	yes	PES
Mohácsi Viktória	SzDSz	Selected 4.	no	no	ALDE
Szent-Iványi István	SzDSz	Selected 1.	yes	yes	ALDE

*the winning position has been decided by recent opinion polls, which claim that Fidesz might earn 13, the MSzP 6, and the MDF, SzDSz and Jobbik 1-1 mandates.

Table 2. The old MEPs of the parties – reselected or not (with the position of the selected)

With respect to this personal level we can conclude that the criteria of the selection were highly diverse. Incumbency advantage has been accepted – it was 100% in Fidesz that does not have to face electoral pressure but it was clearly a criterion in the Socialists, MSzP and the SzDSz, Liberals as well. Policy-expertise considerations were also present, that is candidates with a policy profile have been nominated. This was particularly the case in the Socialist Party. Naturally, political considerations played a role. This criterion appeared in the “export” of a minister to the top of the Socialist list, in placing two “old” national party politicians on the Fidesz list, and the unexpected composition of the MDF list leaders. Sometimes personal considerations (someone is needed or not needed somewhere) did complement the political criteria. Last but not least the person’s actual position in the national party hierarchy and his/her support by a party branch or regional unit also serve as important criteria for the selection. This list (and the examples behind) proves that the preparation of the candidate list has been a highly complex process in which different criteria compete and complement each other.

At this point we have to note that the gender criterion appears only in the case of the Socialist Party. The first three positions on their list are occupied by three women, two of them being active in gender issues, and supported by the party’s gender branch as well as international organs. The proportion of women among Hungarian MEPs is around the EP average right now but it will possibly decrease after the coming EP elections. This comes as no surprise because on the national level the Hungarian parliament is placed 25th among the EU member states in terms of female proportions, being on the 10% level.

In face of the low level of transparency of the process and the complexity of the selection criteria one has to ask a more general question: what is the level of institutionalization? By institutionalization we mean how the process is embedded in party life, how is it handled, whether formal rules do exist or not. There are party differences, the two big parties showing a higher level of institutionalization. The level of institutionalization on the European level very much resembles to that on the national level. This is an interesting finding: parties do not behave fundamentally differently on the national and on the European levels. In terms of institutionalization it is advisable to differentiate between selection and election with the possible conclusion that selection is less institutionalized (more informal and less transparent) while the election, that is the “vote proper”, the legitimization of the selected is more clearly regulated and institutionalized in each party.

Another important question is the comparative strength of the internal and the external political environment in the selection process. Altogether we have found that the internal, that is the national environment and actors are stronger than the external environment, still the latter does also matter. By external environment we mean the European Parliament through the experiences, the embeddedness, and performance of the incumbent MEPs and also the relevant European parties. In the analysis some concrete examples have been provided. Here we should note the party variation: it seems that the external impact was the strongest in case of the Socialists but the reason does not necessarily lie in organizational or political matters, it might be explained by the heavier competition in the MSzP, Socialists because of their low level of popularity back at home. We have not found any formal cooperation between the European part(ies) and the national parties concerning the evaluation of the MEPs, which adds to the question raised above: there seem to be several, diverse and sometimes controversial and even contradictory criteria for the selection process - but no clear vision on what grounds are they selected or deselected.

The following table (Table 3) provides a comparative summary of the above conclusions by party.

Topic/Party	Fidesz	MSzP	SzDSz	MDF	Jobbik
Level of institutionalization	high	high	low	middle	very low
Level of transparency of the process	low	medium	low	medium	very low
Possible impact of the international environment (European party)	medium	high	medium	low	na
Clear regulation in party statute	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Level of informality (as opposed to written rules)	high	medium	high	high	high
Importance of the selected person's national party position	medium	high	low	low	medium
Decentralization of the process (impact of local base or party branch)	medium	high	medium	medium	low
Formal legitimization (vote) is pursued by	National Council	Party Congress	National Council	National Council	Presidium

Table 3. Expert's evaluation of the candidate selection process

Annex: Applied methods

- analysis of party statutes
- analysis of particular events of the selection process (party congresses, etc.)
- analysis of MEPs', new candidates', party leaders' speeches and general appearance in different media
- monitoring public events with the participation of candidates
- interviews with a group of selected and deselected politicians and persons in charge of EU affairs in the given parties
- analysis of media reflections

NETHERLANDS

Introduction

This report describes how candidates for the European Parliament are selected in the various Dutch political parties. In June 2009 the Netherlands will elect a total of 25 members of the European Parliament. They will be elected in the same way in which the members of the national parliament are elected: by means of proportional representation. The most important characteristics of this system are as follows:

- the political parties compile a list of candidates
- the voter may indicate one preference
- there is as it were one constituency that comprises the entire electorate
- individuals above the age of 18 are entitled to vote and are eligible for election
- there is no electoral threshold but there is a quota.

The quota for the elections for the European Parliament in 2009 is 4%. Table 1 shows how the number of seats and percentages have changed since 1979. The Netherlands has a system of proportional representation, which results in a relatively large number of parties being elected to parliament. Since 1979 the Dutch seats in the European Parliament have been spread over a minimum of four parties and a maximum of eight. This report describes the procedures for selecting candidates from the parties that meet the following criteria: 1) the party is now represented in the European Parliament and 2) in the last European or national election, the party won more than 2% of the votes. Ten parties meet these criteria. CDA, PvdA, VVD, GroenLinks, SP, the combination of ChristenUnie-SGP, D66 and Europa Transparant are all represented in the European Parliament. In the last European election, the Partij voor de Dieren (PvdD) won 3.2% of the votes. In the last national election, the Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV) won more than 2% of the votes and has 9 of the 150 seats in the national parliament. They will probably participate in the European elections. We tried to contact the PVV and the PvdD about their procedures but the PVV didn't respond to our repeated requests for information. The PvdD was unable to tell us everything about the procedure. Europa Transparant has meanwhile disbanded. Consequently, these three parties will not be dealt with in this report.

For the remaining seven parties, a study was done on the articles of association, the private regulations and - if they existed - the regulations for nominating candidates. This information has been supplemented with information from personal interviews with members of the five largest parties. In order to compare the various procedures, an overview has been drawn up showing the steps in the process by which the various parties nominate their candidates (table 2).

Table 1. Distribution of seats held by the Dutch political parties in the European Parliament from 1979 to 2004

	1979		1984		1989		1994		1999		2004	
	seats	%										
CDA	10	35.6	8	30.0	10	34.6	10	30.8	9	26.9	7	24.4
PvdA	9	30.4	9	33.7	8	30.7	8	22.9	6	20.1	7	23.6
VVD	4	16.1	5	18.9	3	13.6	6	17.9	6	19.7	4	13.2
D66	2	9.0		2.3	1	6.0	4	11.7	2	5.8	1	4.2
GroenLinks*			2	5.6	2	7.0	1	3.7	4	11.8	2	7.4
SP						0.7		1.3	1	5.0	2	7.0
CU-SGP**			1	5.2	1	5.9	2	7.8	3	8.7	2	5.9
ET											2	7.3
PvdD												3.2
LPF												2.5
CD				2.5		0.8				0.5		
De Groenen								2.4				
Europese Groenen				1.3								
SGP		2.2										
CPN		1.7										
PSP		1.7										
PPR		1.6										
GPV		1.1										
Other		0.4		0.4		0.8		0.5		1.3		1.2
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	31	100	31	100	27	100
Percentage of votes cast		58.1		50.9		47.5		35.7		30.0		39.3

* GroenLinks participated in the 1984 elections under the name of Groen Progressief Akkoord and in 1989 under the name of Regenboog.

** In the elections of 1984, 1989, 1994 and 1999, GPV/RPF/SGP participated under the name of GPV/RPF/SGP.

Table 2. The procedures by which Dutch political parties compile their lists of candidates

	CDA	PvdA	VVD	GroenLinks	SP	ChristenUnie	SGP	D66
General								
Start of procedure	April 2008	Begin 2008	January 2008	February 2008	April 2008	Spring 2008	February 2008	April 2008
Committee to nominate candidates	Permanent (and for each election)	For each election	Permanent	For each election	For each election	For each election	For each election	Permanent
Person heading the list								
Nomination	Nominees Board	Nominees 50 members	Nominees branch	Nominees 15 members; branch; committee	Individually	Individually; Nominees branch; committee	Nominees branch	Nominees 1% members
Deadline for nominating candidates	Not applicable	25 September 2008	30 June 2008	15 September 2008	1 September 2008	15 August 2008	1 June 2008	25 September 2008
Date of election	8 November 2008	8-18 December 2008	26 September - 8 October 2008	12 January - 1 February 2009	Spring 2009	November 2008	20 February 2009	8 November 2008
Way in which top position on list is chosen	Congress	Referendum	Referendum	Referendum	Party Council	UnieCongress	Board	Referendum
Voting system used to elect top position on list	Acclamation	STV	STV	STV	Value of vote	Value of vote	Not applicable	Value of vote
Threshold of voter turnout in referendum	Not applicable	15%	None	30%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	10%
Turnout	Not applicable	17%	30%	Not yet known	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not yet known
List from no. 2 onwards								
Nomination	Individually; Nominees branch	Individually	Nominees branch	Nominees 15 members; branch; committee	Individually	Individually; Nominees branch; committee	Nominees branch	Individually
Deadline for nominating candidates	1 September 2008	25 September 2008	30 June 2008	15 September 2008	1 September 2008	15 August 2008	1 June 2008	8 December 2008

Preference male/female	No	50% women	No	At least 50% women; immigrants	No	At least 25% women and 1 in the top 3; immigrants	Men only	No
List of recommendations	Board	Committee	Board	Committee	Committee	Committee	Board	Committee
Date of finalising list	January 2009	7 February 2009	16 December 2008	7 March 2009	Spring 2009	January 2009	20 February 2009	February 2009
Way in which list finalised	Voting in branches	Congress of representatives	Referendum	Congress	Party Council	UnieCongress	Board decides	Referendum
System used to finalise list	Weighted mean	Value of vote	STV	Value of vote	Value of vote	Value of vote	Not applicable	Weighted mean
Threshold of voter turnout in referendum	Not applicable	Not applicable	None	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	10%
Turnout	Not applicable	Not applicable	20%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not yet known
Special details						List is merged with SGP list	List is merged with CU lists	

As can be inferred from table 2, a significant characteristic of the procedures for nominating candidates is the importance of the person heading the list of candidates in the Dutch electoral system. Many parties therefore use another procedure to nominate this individual than they do to nominate candidates for the other positions on the list. Our research also shows that the European fractions or parties have no influence on the candidates nominated for the Dutch political parties. Of the seven parties discussed in this report, six have been represented in the European Parliament for quite some time. At this moment the following Dutch political parties are members of the following European parties or factions: the CDA is a member of the EPP, the PvdA is a member of the PES, the VVD is a member of ALDE, GroenLinks is a member of the Greens/EFA, the SP is a member of EUL/NGL, ChristenUnie-SGP is a member of IND-DEM and D66 is a member of ALDE. Four of these parties, the CDA, the PvdA, the VVD and GroenLinks, have officially registered their membership in a European faction or party. All of the parties say that no agreements have been made with European factions or parties about the procedures for the selection of candidates. These procedures are a matter of internal concern for the national political parties.

In this report we describe the procedure that each party uses in drawing up its list of candidates. The parties will be dealt with in the order determined by the election results of 2004. Following this is a chapter focusing on the criteria that the parties use to select candidates. Chapter 4 contains an analysis of these procedures. The conclusion will be presented in the last chapter.

Procedures

Christen Democratisch Appèl (CDA)

The CDA follows two procedures when drawing up its list of candidates: one procedure to elect the person to head the list and another to fill the rest of the positions on the list. The reasons behind this are both substantive and procedural. The top position is vital to the image of the party and he or she must be capable of creating a political profile. In addition, the person heading the list advises the party on how the rest of the list should be filled. Consequently, the person in the top position has to be elected first. Below is first a description of the procedure followed to elect the person to head the list of candidates and then a description of the procedure for the rest of the list.

The choice of the person to head the list is a matter for the board. In board meetings discussions are held on who could be a standard bearer for the party in the European elections. After the intended candidate and the key party figures such as the party leader have been informed of the choice, the candidate is announced. The provincial and local branches may propose an opposing candidate if he or she has the support of three or more of the provincial branches together and/or ten or more local branches together and/or one percent of the members. This has never yet occurred for the European elections. The candidate heading the list is officially elected at the party congress, often by acclamation.

The HRM division of the party is actively involved in selecting candidates for the rest of the list, as is the advisory committee, the board and the provincial and local branches. The HRM division is continually looking for candidates; furthermore they draw up a candidate profile and determine whether or not it is necessary to advertise for candidates or whether it is sufficient to send a letter with vacancies to the branches, the CDJA (youth organisation) and the CDAV (women's organisation). The advisory committee is appointed by the national executive committee and advised by both the party chairman and the person heading the list. Candidates may present themselves to this committee, which reviews them with respect to the profile. In addition, candidates may be put forward by a provincial or local branch. After reviewing the candidates, the committee then makes a selection of suitable individuals but does not arrange them in any particular order on the list. This list is then sent to the national executive committee. Since the committee does not know all of the candidates, the HRM division organises a day on which candidates and the national executive can become acquainted. Following this, the committee compiles a draft list of recommendations and the party board finalises the list together with the help of extra representatives from the provincial branches. A review committee then investigates the candidates' additional functions.

The elections for the list of candidates take place in the local branches. Every local branch is sent the list of recommendations and the list of nominees together with a ballot. The ballot shows the number of votes for the branch and the following options: 1) follow the recommended list; 2) draw up one's own list of preferences. To determine the national results the votes are counted as follows: the first candidate receives the number of points equal to the number of candidates, candidate number two receives one point less, and so forth. This is multiplied by the number of votes from the local branch. Each local branch has one vote plus one extra vote for every full number of 75 members. A research committee counts the votes. In practice, there are few deviations from the recommended list because it has proven difficult to mobilise enough branches.

The list is made effective at the party congress where the election programme is also decided on. Since the candidates have to support the election programme, the Gravamen committee goes to work after the congress. If there are candidates who object to any of the points in the election programme, they can voice their objections to the committee. In practice, this procedure has proven to be a formality.

Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA)

The PvdA uses a different procedure to elect the person to head the list of candidates than it does for the other candidates on the list. Both procedures begin with a procedure being specified by the board. The board then appoints a committee to nominate candidates, and one member of the board is also a member of this committee. The committee, which works together closely with the board, is responsible for scouting and canvassing candidates and reviewing them with respect to the profile drawn up by the board. Candidates can also present themselves to the board.

Those nominated to head the party must present themselves with fifty declarations of support from party members. The committee makes no recommendations about the

candidates for this position. In order to elect a person to head the list of candidates, the PvdA has chosen for a referendum, which enhances the involvement of party members in the selection of the candidate. Voting is done according to the Single Transferable Vote system³⁹⁹. In addition to indicating an order of preference, members can also abstain. The party congress may deviate from the results of the referendum by at least two thirds of the valid votes cast. However, this has never occurred. The person chosen to head the list of candidates is elected earlier than the remaining candidates on the list since this enables him or her to influence the rest of the list.

Candidates for the list of nominees can individually present themselves to the committee to nominate candidates. This committee reviews those who have put themselves forward and draws up a draft list of candidates for the board, who accepts it with or without changes. The board is advised in this by the party leader, the chairmen of the party factions in the Upper and Lower House, the person intended to head the list of candidates and the functioning chair of the PvdA in the Socialist Faction (PES) of the European Parliament. Once the draft list has been drawn up, voting is done at the party congress, which is attended by representatives from the branches. The voting begins with the first name on the list. If there are no opposing candidates, the proposed candidate is elected by acclamation. If there are opposing candidates, a vote is held in which a candidate must receive at least 50% of the votes. Only persons who are lower on the draft list or who have not been placed on the alphabetical list can present themselves as opposing candidates. An opposing candidate is often chosen but, if defeated, he or she can compete again for another position. The party congress determines the final list.

Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD)

De VVD uses the same procedure to elect the person to head the list of candidates as they do for the other candidates on the list. However, the person chosen to head the list of candidates is elected earlier because he or she is important to the party's image. Both procedures begin with the written request from the party executive to the local and provincial branches asking them to nominate candidates. The VVD has chosen to work in this way because they want candidates to have grassroots support.

Those nominated to head the list of candidates are presented by a branch. In addition, the party executive can also present a candidate but, after poor experience with this in the past, the party has now moved away from this option. There is no profile of criteria for the candidates and the threshold for nomination is low. Now and again, the party executive informally orders a candidate to withdraw. If there is more than one candidate, a

³⁹⁹ In the Single Transferable Vote system as many votes can be cast as there are candidates and an order of preference can be indicated. A candidate is elected only if he or she receives more than 50% of the votes cast. In the first count, only the voters' first preference is considered. If no candidate receives more than 50% of the votes in the first round, the candidate with the fewest votes is dropped from the list. Then the ballots on which that candidate held the first place of preference are looked at again in the second round in which the votes for candidates holding the second place of preference are counted. The votes cast are added to the votes for the candidates remaining from the first round. If no candidate receives more than 50% of the votes in the second round, the candidate with the fewest votes is dropped from the list. This process is repeated until one of the candidates has received more than 50% of the votes.

referendum is held among the members. The winning candidate must receive at least 50% of the votes. Voting is done in accordance with the Single Transferable Vote system.

The VVD has a permanent scouting committee (PSC) that is continually looking for potential candidates for representative functions in the party. The PSC is also very active in drawing up the list of candidates. They are told by the party executive which type of candidates they should search for, such as young people, women or immigrants. Interested candidates can also present themselves to the PSC. The candidates are reviewed by the PSC with respect to a profile with quality demands that they themselves have drawn up. In addition to these candidates, the branches can also propose candidates. The party executive then analyzes the large list of candidates and draws from it a list of those it recommends; they are assisted in this by the person heading the list of candidates and the faction chairmen. In addition to searching for quality, the party board also takes other characteristics into consideration, such as the ratio of males to females and regional representation. The criteria used by the party executive are not fixed but are rather decided upon by the board. The party will not search for as much variation in the candidates for the elections for the European Parliament because they expect to win only about 4 seats.

The list is drawn up by a referendum based on the Single Transferable Vote system. All party members are sent a ballot with the following choices: 1) agree with the list of recommendations; 2) make one's own list of order of preference; 3) supplement one's own list of preferences with names from the list of recommendations. The candidate chosen for each position on the list is the one who has received at least 50% of the votes. In general, there are few deviations from the recommended list since the members often agree with it.

GroenLinks

GroenLinks uses a different procedure to elect the person to head the list of candidates than it does for the other candidates on the list. The person heading the list of candidates is chosen by referendum in order to involve as many members as possible in this choice. In addition, this person is chosen earlier because he or she must have been decided upon before the rest of the list can be compiled at the party congress. In this way, candidates who are not chosen for the first position on the list are then available for the following positions. The first part of the procedures begins with the initiative taken by the party board to start preparations for the election. After preparations have been made, the party council, comprised of representatives from local and provincial branches, makes decisions on proposals from the party board. It also decides on the procedure, the profile sketch and the criteria for candidates and, following the recommendations of the party board, it appoints the candidates committee. The candidate profiles and the criteria for the list are drawn up by the board and can be either accepted or changed by the party council. The candidates committee later refines the profiles.

Those interested in heading the list of candidates must present themselves to the candidates committee with the support of 15 members. They are then reviewed with respect to the profile that has been drawn up. Candidates deemed to be unsuitable by the candidates committee can nevertheless run for the leading position but they are given a negative

recommendation. The referendum is held using the Single Transferable Vote system and a minimum of 30% of the members must cast a vote.

The candidates for the rest of the list also present themselves to the candidates committee for review. The candidates committee then gives its recommendations for the list and, in doing so, it divides the list into blocks. For each block, more candidates may be proposed than can actually be chosen since this gives the members as large a choice as possible. In its recommended list, the candidates committee also indicates which candidates they deem suitable for which block. Four blocks have been created for the elections for the European Parliament. The first block consists of one candidate, namely the person heading the list of candidates, who has already been chosen by referendum. Candidates for the second block, positions 2 to 4, must be deemed capable of holding a seat in the European Parliament. The candidates for block 3 are possible candidates for positions 5 to 10. Block 4 consists of the positions from 11 upwards and is intended for, for example, regional candidates and those at the bottom of the list. All of the candidates can stand as a candidate for all of the positions on the list. The division into blocks is actually only a recommendation. The party congress, which all members can attend, votes on each position on the list of candidates, and the winning candidate for each position is the one who receives more than 50% of the votes. The congress then makes the list definitive.

Socialistische Partij (SP)

The SP follows one procedure for the entire list. Three organs are actively involved in compiling the list of candidates, namely the party board, the party council and the candidate committee. The party council consists of the board and the chairmen of the branches. The candidates committee consists of two members of the board and a member of the Lower House. The SP has chosen to follow a procedure in which the role of the party board is very strong. Loyalty, individual expertise and the ability to work well with others are the most important considerations, and these qualities can best be evaluated if the candidate is known to the board. One of the members of the present candidates committee is the board's general secretary. This individual is also responsible for the 150 branches of the party. Consequently, he knows the party and the potential candidates and he is expected to be able to make the necessary evaluations.

The procedure begins when the party board, in the person of the general secretary, prepares the procedure leading to the list of candidates. The party council then appoints the candidates committee, a committee consisting of a member of the party council, a member of the board and a member of the factions. The candidates committee advertises in the members' magazine and on the party's website, after which interested members may present themselves to the committee as a candidate. These members do not need to have a declaration of support. The candidates committee does not draw up a profile, but it does use informal criteria. Extra demands are made on the individual nominated to head the list since, as a public figure, this person must be able to create a political profile, to win votes and to lead a faction.

The candidates committee decides who they want to speak with and who they want to set on which place on the list of recommendations. The party board draws up the draft of the list of recommendations, which is then made definitive by the party council. Individuals who have not been placed on the list can present themselves as an opposing candidate via the party council if they have the support of a branch or of 50 members. The opposing candidate is nominated for a specific position on the list, so he or she competes with one person. When the party council votes on the list, they first vote on the positions with an opposing candidate. The person who loses this election is dropped from the list and cannot stand candidate for another position on the list. Following this, the entire list is decided upon by the party council, and, as the last step, the candidates are asked if they agree to their candidacy.

ChristenUnie - Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (CU-SGP)

At the national level the ChristenUnie and the SGP are two separate parties. For each election at the European level, they consider the option of drawing up a joint list. As they did in 2004, they have again decided to work together in the 2009 elections. Discussions about this option take place at the same time that each of the parties draws up its own list of candidates, which is why the procedure should be divided into two phases: 1) each party compiles its own list and 2) negotiations are held on merging the lists. The subjects discussed are which party will supply the candidate to lead the list, what the order of the list will be, the electoral programme and the mutual campaign. One of the factors determining the order of the list of candidates is the size of the party at the moment of negotiations. In the coming election, it has been decided to have the ChristenUnie supply the person to head the list of candidates since this party is now larger than the SGP in the national parliament. Consequently, candidates from each of the two parties will not be placed in turns on the list, but the ChristenUnie will supply more candidates. Each of the two parties will decide on its own share of the list. Below is a description of the individual procedures for nominating candidates as followed by the ChristenUnie and by the SGP.

The SGP does not differentiate in electing the person to head the list of candidates and in drawing up the rest of the list. However, the different positions on the list of candidates do play a role in the selection process as such. The party board appoints a selection advisory committee that includes at least one member of the board and whose task it is to make motivated recommendations for a list of candidates. In the party's publication, the board asks the electoral clubs (local branches) to suggest the names of suitable candidates. The selection advisory committee also considers those persons who were proposed by the electoral clubs in the previous election, who were placed on the list of candidates in the previous election or who were found by either the board or the selection advisory committee. Potential candidates are evaluated on a number of criteria, such as expertise and a spread with regard to region, age and church background; moreover, the party strives for a balance between continuity and new names on the list of candidates. The motivated recommendations of the selection advisory committee are discussed by the board, after which a draft list of candidates is compiled. The board then sends this list to the advisory council, a body of 29 trusted representatives who are chosen by the provincial branches. The board then decides on the list (with or without changes) that it will submit to the electoral

clubs for advice. After the members have held their general meetings, they make their recommendations about the list. The recommendations are decided on by majority vote. If the recommendations of the electoral clubs lead to changes in the draft list, the board will again turn to the advisory council. Following this, the board draws up the final list. Because of religious considerations, there are no women on the SGP's list of candidates.

The ChristenUnie also draws up its lists of candidates at one time. The party board is responsible for preparing the nominations and for the elections. It begins by making a planning for the procedure. Then the Unie Congress is held to make a profile sketch of the candidates and one of the faction, to discuss any possible connections or mergers between lists and to appoint a selection committee. The Unie Congress consists of representatives of the electoral clubs (local branches), the youth organisation and the board. Each electoral club has a number of votes in proportion to the number of members. The selection committee, consisting of at least three members, is responsible for canvassing and selecting candidates and making recommendations on the list of candidates. These recommendations are submitted to the board, which then proposes a list of candidates. The Unie Congress draws up the definitive list. Members of the congress can propose changing the list by switching candidates already listed to a higher or lower position. Every position is put to the vote unless there is only one candidate. If there is more than one candidate, a vote is held and the position is given to the candidate who receives more than 50% of the vote. If that does not happen in one round, the candidate with the fewest votes is dropped from the list and this procedure is repeated until one candidate has an absolute majority of the votes. The congress thus decides on the final list.

Democraten 66 (D66)

D66 uses a different procedure to elect the person to head the list of candidates than it does for the other candidates on the list. Both procedures begin at the party congress, where a draft profile is drawn up by the national board. A national election committee is responsible for the election procedure. This is an independent, permanent committee whose members are chosen by the party congress. The election committee sets out a timeline.

All candidates present themselves to the election committee, which checks to make sure that each of these individuals meets the formal demands. They do not hold a substantive review.

To be nominated as the candidate heading the list, candidates must have a declaration of support form at least 1% of those eligible to vote. The person who heads the list is chosen by a referendum based on the Single Transferable Vote system. In addition to indicating one's preference, members may also abstain from voting.

After the other candidates have been accepted by the election committee, advice on how to vote is brought out by the person heading the list for the election and the party chairman. There is then a vote by referendum in which the members can either chose to follow the advice or indicate their own order of preference of a minimum and maximum number of names. The first-choice candidate receives a value equivalent to the maximum number of

votes that a voter may cast. The candidate for the subsequent position of preference receives a value having one point less, and so forth.

When the votes are counted, the values for each candidate are added up. The candidate who receives the highest value is the first one chosen; that is, he or she follows the person who heads the list. The candidate who has received the next highest value is the next to be listed, etc. If two or more candidates have the same value, the position will be given to the candidate who had the most first-choice votes. The referendum is valid only if 10% of the members have voted. If the number of candidates is equal to the number of vacant seats, then one can only vote for or against on the ballot.

Criteria for selecting candidates

The Dutch electoral law stipulates a number of criteria for accepting a candidate to the list of candidates:

- The candidate must be put on the list in a manner set forth by a general procedure defined by the board;
- The candidate must submit a declaration attesting to the fact that he or she agrees to his or her nomination;
- If the candidate lives outside of the Netherlands, he or she must have appointed someone who is authorised to represent him or her;
- In the period in which the European Parliament is in session, he or she must have reached the age required to be eligible for election (18 years old).

In addition to this the electoral law has set forth a number of criteria that have to be met in order to hold a seat in the European Parliament:

- The candidate must be at least 18 years old and not barred from being eligible for election in the Dutch parliament;
- If the candidate is a citizen of another member country, he or she must be a resident of the Netherlands, must have reached the age of 18 and must not be barred from being eligible for election either in the Netherlands or the country of which he or she is a citizen;

The political parties also make additional demands on their own candidates and on the list as a whole. The parties differ in the level of formality; some of the parties have included these demands in their articles of association or private regulations, whereas others have not put their requirements to paper even though they do use informal criteria.

Demands made by all of the parties on their candidates are substantive expertise, communication skills, political experience and the ability to work with others. Some of the parties, such as the CDA and D66, also require a membership of at least one year and the SGP requires a membership of at least 2 years. D66 also states that the candidate may not be a member of another party and that he or she has never been involved in fascist or racist activities or publications. The SGP is the only party to have set a maximum age limit (70) unless the candidate has a seat in the European Parliament. Some of the parties (for example, SP, GroenLinks and D66) ask their candidates to sign an agreement on payments.

In addition to the criteria for individual candidates, parties also draw up criteria for lists in their entirety. Parties try to achieve diversity with regard to both expertise (for example, economic, social and environmental expertise) and the basis of their target groups (for example, women, immigrants). Some parties, such as the PvdA and GroenLinks, have recorded in their articles of association that they try to realise an equal representation of both men and women. The ChristenUnie strives to realise a minimum of 25% women and a minimum of 1 woman in the top 3 described in the profile sketch. When drawing up their lists of candidates, the other parties try to have the best possible proportion of men to women. An exception to this is the SGP, who does not allow female candidates because of religious considerations.

Another list criterion is immigrant participation; the ChristenUnie and GroenLinks have put this requirement to paper. The ChristenUnie specifies this to be Christian immigrants. All parties also take the spread in region and age groups into consideration.

Analysis

The person heading the list of candidates

Four of the seven parties described in this report – the CDA, the PvdA, GroenLinks and D66 – use a different procedure to choose a person to head the list of candidates than they do to compile the rest of the list. Moreover, the person in the top position in these four parties and in the VVD is also chosen earlier than the other candidates on the list. In four parties – the CDA, the PvdA, the VVD and D66 – this is because the person heading the list can then give advice about the remaining positions. In this way, he or she has influence on his or her ‘team’ in the European Parliament after the elections. For GroenLinks, the earlier choice of the top position allows candidates who do not succeed in winning this position to stand candidate for the rest of the list.

The choice of the person to head the list is a very open procedure for the PvdA, the VVD, GroenLinks and D66. All members may be nominated and all members can participate in the election for the top position by means of a referendum. In the case of the CDA, the SP and the CU-SGP, the party board proposes a candidate for the top position to the members or to a representation of members. However, the SP and the CU-SGP allow all party members to nominate themselves. Formally speaking, it is always possible to propose an opposing candidate but, in practice, this rarely or never happens.

Parties have other criteria for the person heading the list of candidates than they do for the rest of the list. It is important that the person in the top position can create a profile and can win votes, that he or she has a binding effect and that he or she can lead the faction. The VVD does not use other criteria for the top position since they feel that the referendum in which this person is chosen guarantees that the person at the top of the list is one who can win votes.

Rest of the list

In all cases, the board or a specially appointed committee draws up recommendations for the rest of the list. Some parties also elect the rest of the list by a referendum (VVD and D66). The CDA and the SGP have their members vote on the list, either in the branches or in the electoral clubs. In the case of the SGP, this vote is a recommendation to the board, which compiles the list. The PvdA, GroenLinks, the SP and the CU submit the draft list to a congress or party council. In some cases, the names on the list of recommendations are not listed in order of preference but rather in alphabetical order together with an explanation on the candidate's suitability. One party (GroenLinks) asks the committee to give more names for each block on the list than there are available positions for each block.

Quality versus internal party democracy

Internal party democracy plays an important role for all of the parties. On the other hand, all parties value having a list of sufficient quality. In order to safeguard this quality, various parties use various instruments. The CDA and the VVD are continually scouting for talent. For each election, all of the parties appoint a committee to select candidates based on various criteria. These criteria are sometimes decided on by this committee and sometimes by the board. A committee may also be asked to look for candidates (GroenLinks). The committees usually consist of party members experienced in selecting candidates. There is also often a member of the party board (PvdA, SP, SGP) or the committee is advised by the person who has already been chosen to head the list. (CDA, PvdA, VVD and D66). In the case of the SP, the committee consists of three persons from the board, the party council or the faction from the national parliament. This party wants to be actively involved in the selection in order to safeguard the quality of the list.

The influence of party members on compiling the list

The influence of the members on the choice of the person to head the list of candidates is large in those parties who hold a referendum on this issue. The VVD (2), the PvdA (4) and GroenLinks (5) offered their members the choice of several candidates for the top position. D66 had just one candidate this time. In the other parties, the influence of the members is relatively small since a candidate is usually proposed to the members. In these cases, the influence of members on the rest of the list is larger than on the choice of the person heading the list.

Recommendations are made in all of the parties, although these recommendations are often not fully adopted. In the parties who hold a referendum on the rest of the list (VVD and D66), members are able to choose between following the recommendation or indicating their own order of preference. If the voting leads to any changes, these are always marginal. This is also true of parties who present their lists to the branches or electoral clubs (CDA and SGP). The other parties compile the list at a congress or party council. Here too, there may be changes with respect to the list of recommendations. In all parties, it is possible to propose an opposing candidate for a position on the list. In the recommendations made for GroenLinks, more candidates are proposed for each position and it is also possible to add candidates who were not recommended by the committee.

Conclusion

At the request of the European Parliament, the Institute for Public Participation (IPP) carried out a study on how the list of candidates for European elections is compiled in the various Dutch political parties. Ten parties or combinations of parties met the following criteria: 1) the party is now represented in the European Parliament, 2) in the last European or national election, the party won more than 2% of the votes. These parties are the Christen Democratisch Appèl (CDA), Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA), Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD), GroenLinks, Socialistische Partij (SP), the combination of the ChristenUnie and Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (SGP), Democraten 66 (D66), the Partij Voor de Vrijheid (PVV), the Partij voor de Dieren (PvdD) and Europa Transparent. The last three parties mentioned were not included in the study. Europa Transparent disbanded, the PVV failed to respond to requests for information and the PvdD was unable to tell us everything about the procedure. In this study we examined the parties' articles of association and regulations and we also spoke with the remaining seven parties. In addition, we also studied the criteria of the electoral law as well as the influence of European parties and fractions on the list of nominations within the Dutch political parties.

The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

- Because of the system of proportional representation, the person heading the list of candidates holds a significant position for the list. The parties spend a great amount of time and energy in electing the person to head their lists. The influence on the choice of this individual is either very large or relatively small;
- Nominations for positions on the rest of the list are very open. The candidate usually needs the support of a branch or of a limited number of members. Some parties set stipulations relating to how long the candidate has been a member of the party;
- In all cases studied, the board or the committee appointed by the board largely influences the rest of the list. The final lists show only marginal deviations from the recommendations;
- European parties and factions have no influence on how the Dutch political parties compile their lists of candidates.

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AUSTRIA

Introduction

The objective of this study is to find out how candidates who run for a seat in the European Parliament are selected by their own parties. Moreover, attention is also to be paid to the question as to whether and to what extent European-level representatives of the very same parties play a role in these selection procedures.

When work on this study started, the expectation had been to find plenty of information and some precise regulation how the candidates are selected. However, the contrary was the case. The regulation in the party statutes turned out to be minimal – except for the statutes of the Greens. Moreover, the interview partners from the Austrian parties have displayed some level of hesitation when talking about the issue of candidate selection. Thus, the collection of relevant data has been one of the major challenges faced when preparing this paper.

Why is so little information available? It seems to be a very sensitive issue to talk about informal procedures and the selection of candidates for a party. This could be because of the way a party works. A party is not a business company where people have to send a CV, present themselves and convince the employer to trust in them and give him/her a job. People decide to join a party because they want to change something or serve the ideas represented by the party. This means the more you do, the more you invest, the more people you know, the more supporters you find, the better and faster you advance in your career. And if you are patient enough and steady, the party will “owe” you a favour, which means that you might be offered a good job as a recompense for your efforts. This is not to say that none of the candidates selected was qualified for the job. Of course they are, but it is not the only criterion that is considered as many other factors play an important role as well that have to do with the nature of a party and its functioning.

The media coverage of the European election campaign 2009 has not yet started in full extent due to the fact that the two biggest parties in Austria – the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ) and the Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP) – have announced to present their teams as late as in February and March respectively. This means that the search for candidates is still going on. This also implies that some parties in question value discretion when selecting their candidates and do not want to have a public selection procedure. This kind of discretion, of course, poses a great challenge with respect to the research goals of the present study.

However, in order to accomplish these research goals, this study, on the one hand, draws from studies that have been done on the subject so far, which are very few in number. On the other hand, great value is attributed to primary sources such as party statutes, party websites and related legislation and regulations. Furthermore, the results of interviews conducted with Austrian Members of the European Parliament and representatives of the Austrian media specialized on EU-related topics are also included in this study. Media

reports of relevance are therefore also being paid due attention. As for the material available on the subject, it is worth noting that this proved to be much more scant than had been initially expected. Thus, this study will not only analyze the statutes of Austrian parties and provide information on the legislative background, but also briefly outline the broader context in Austrian politics and other interesting details.

Overview of the Austrian political landscape

Since the new Austrian coalition government between the Austrian Social Democrat Party and the Austrian People's Party came into power in December 2008 (after the early elections held in September 2008), there has been a general change regarding the evaluation of the importance of the European Union (EU). Austria's Chancellor Werner Faymann had announced back in June 2008 – when he was Minister for Traffic, Innovation and Technology – to submit all EU Treaties in the future to a national referendum. This was interpreted as a genuflection to the largest and therefore most powerful – populist – newspaper *Die Kronen Zeitung*. The problem with this announcement was that it undermined the government's original pro-European stance and the coalition treaty. This however did mean the end of the coalition government under Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer. Nevertheless, the announcement by Mr. Faymann was the reason why former Minister for European and International Affairs Ursula Plassnik (ÖVP) declined to continue her work under the new Chancellor, Werner Faymann, and turned over the post to Michael Spindelegger. During the election campaign, Werner Faymann also emphasised national issues.

Given this political situation and the fact that most of the Austrians prefer to read the daily *Kronen Zeitung*, which is obviously highly critical of the EU, there is a permanent neglect of EU topics in the media. There might be an article on summits or conferences (etc.), but if the issue does not concern Austria directly or its interests, it is not very likely to find any comments or opinions. Although there are several high quality newspapers that do have proper EU coverage, they are not read by broad parts of society, while *Kronen Zeitung* is a paper with a wide circulation.

In the national elections of 2008, two right wing parties succeeded in increasing their votes enormously: the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) increased its votes by 6,5% and the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) with 6,6%.⁴⁰⁰ So, one could expect these parties to be rather successful in the 2009 elections to the European Parliament (EP), too. However, there are opinions to the contrary as well. Some experts argue that this election will strengthen the established larger parties (SPÖ and ÖVP), because during times of crisis – like the present one – voters tend to support the governing parties which in their view represent stability.⁴⁰¹

The above just BZÖ was established in 2005 by the former head of the Austrian Freedom Party Jörg Haider after continuous internal disputes between different wings of the party.

⁴⁰⁰ <http://wahl08.bmi.gv.at/>

⁴⁰¹ Kopeining, Margarethe, EU-Wahl: Die Wirtschaftskrise hilft der SPÖ und der ÖVP, Kurier, 28.01.2009, page 5

In the national elections in 2008 the BZÖ was very successful in Carinthia, where Mr. Haider was governor, but had rather low reception in the rest of Austria. The Austrian Freedom Party continued work with their new head Hans-Christian Strache. Andreas Mölzer, the European delegate of the Austrian Freedom Party, remained in the original party with Mr. Strache and did not join Mr. Haider's team. Therefore, one "limitation" for the present study was to examine the selection process in the Austrian Freedom Party, but not to consider the BZÖ. Insiders expect the BZÖ to participate in the European elections, but to fail in reaching the national 4% barrier to gain a mandate. They add that even though the Party gained 10.7% ⁴⁰²of the votes in the last national election in autumn 2008, this outcome was mainly due to the high popularity and success of Mr. Haider in the province of Carinthia. The next aspect that should be mentioned in this context is the death of Mr. Haider in October 2008 and the possibility of the BZÖ losing much of its electorate.

Regarding the topics that could play a role during the upcoming electoral campaign to the EP, it is foreseeable that national issues will play the biggest role, but also the economic and financial crisis, as well as the Lisbon Treaty are expected to be discussed sharply.

Nevertheless, the EU scepticism of Austrians has decreased by several percent points in recent months. As a consequence, Austria is no longer the EU member where the level of EU scepticism is the highest. It is the fourth-last in the list, but the level of contentment with the EU is still below the EU-27 average. Reasons for this more positive attitude towards the EU can be found in the steps taken by the European Union to alleviate the effects of the world wide financial and economical crisis.

The results of the national Eurobarometer conducted by the Gallup Institute among 1003 Austrians between October and November 2008 were surprising, too. 47% of Austrians indicated that the EU membership was a positive thing for Austria, which means an increase of 11% compared to autumn 2007. Moreover, the poll revealed that 45% of Austrians thought the EU offered protection against the negative effects of globalisation (which is an increase of 15%). However, the EU enlargement is still not approved by 67% of the Austrians although the Austrian economy and therefore also the Austrian labour market have profited far more from enlargement than other European countries. But these benefits have been communicated poorly to the domestic population. This is why Richard Kühnel, the representative of the EU Commission in Austria, sees a huge lack of communication between the industry and the people.⁴⁰³

Austrian parties represented in the European Parliament

The elections on 13 June 2004 opened the possibility for 6,049,129 Austrians to cast their vote, but only 42.4% ⁴⁰⁴ took the chance compared to an average of 70% of voters in the last

⁴⁰² Electoral outcome can be found on the homepage of the Ministry for internal Affairs on the WWW under URL http://wahl08.bmi.gv.at/bl_8.htm (27.01.2009)

⁴⁰³ Newspaper „Die Presse“, „EU – Skepsis: Österreich hat die rote Laterne abgegeben“, 21.01.2009, online edition URL <http://diepresse.com/home/politik/eu/445775/print.do>

⁴⁰⁴ Electoral outcome available on the homepage of the Ministry for internal Affairs on the WWW under http://www.bmi.gv.at/wahlen/europawahl_2004_gesamtergebnis.asp (10.12.2008)

two general elections, which can be interpreted as a lack of interest and poor publicity or as a low awareness of the importance of this election. The results were as follows:

Social Democratic Party of Austria: 833.517 votes (33.33%)⁴⁰⁵, 7 mandates
Austrian Peoples Party: 817.716 votes (32.70%), 6 mandates
Freedom Party of Austria: 157.722 votes, (6.31%), 1 mandate
The Greens: 322.429 votes, (12.89%), 2 mandates
(Opposition for a Solidary Europe: 19.530 votes (0,78%), no mandate)
List Dr. Hans-Peter Martin: 349.696 votes (13,98%), 2 mandates

Apart from the parties mentioned above, Hans-Peter Martin's List succeeded in securing two seats in the European Parliament (EP) in the latest elections of 2004. Nonetheless, as this List does not constitute a party and does not have a national branch, which in turn means that there are no specific regulations about how candidates are selected, it was decided not to include it in this study despite the fact that the List gained more than 2% of the votes in the elections, in fact it gained 13.98%. Furthermore, the List is not embedded in any European parliamentary group and the second member of the List, Ms. Karin Resetarits, left it due to disagreements with the leading Mr. Martin. She joined the Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe. Ms. Resetarits as well as Mr Martin and Mr. Andreas Mölzer from the Austrian Freedom Party are considered as so called *wilde Parlamentarier* ("wild delegates") in Austria.

Legislative regulation

The procedures for the elections to the European Parliament are regulated in the European Election Regulatory (*Europawahlordnung*) and European Voters-Evidence Regulation (*Europa-Wählerevidenzgesetz*) from 1996. They were modified and supplemented in 2007. For the present study, articles 29 to 37 of the European Election Regulatory are the important ones as they outline the rules regarding who is allowed to run for election. Basically, all Austrian citizens above the age of 18 are allowed to run for the European Parliament elections. In the same manner, any EU citizen living in Austria has the possibility to participate in the elections. The candidates have to be nominated 37 days before polling day (§ 30 (1)) at the latest. He or she has to be supported either by at least three delegates to the Austrian Parliament, or by a single delegate to the European Parliament, or by 2600 eligible voters, who are listed in the European Electoral Register (*Wählerevidenz* (§ 30 (2))). In the national legislation, no regulations could be found saying how the parties should nominate or elect their candidates.

Article 31 subparagraph 1 digit 1 from the *Europawahlordnung* allows every party or list to present a maximum of 42 candidates. So the first 6 positions on the list are usually the most important ones and the internal discussions tend to focus on these first places. However, according to Article 63 of this regulation, voters can also vote for a concrete person from the election list and issue a so called "preference vote". This opportunity for a person-related vote made it possible that for example Andreas Mölzer from the Freedom Party of Austria,

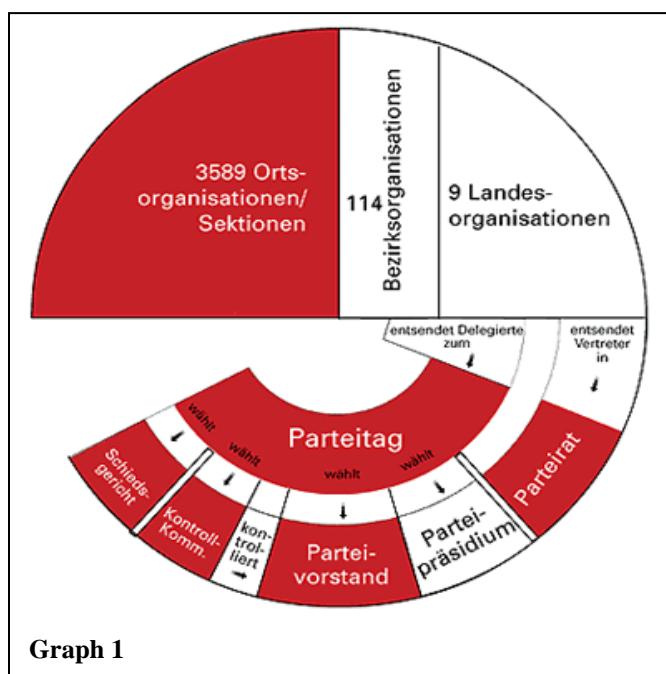
⁴⁰⁵ of the voter participation

who had one of the last places on the election list, could get ahead of Hans Kronberger, who was listed at the top and was thus supposed to get the mandate.

Before proceeding to the party regulations on candidate election, it should also be explained how the mandates are distributed after the election, which is regulated in article 77 of the *European Election Regulatory*. It states that parties which have achieved less than 4% over the entire federal territory are not entitled to get a mandate. The mandates are distributed in correspondence to the votes that have been achieved. If two parties are entitled for the same mandate, the decision is taken by drawing lots.

Party Statutes

Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ, Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs)



Graph 1⁴⁰⁶ shows how the SPÖ is organized. The SPÖ is organised in different levels and the basic level consists of 3.589 local organisations (*Ortsorganisationen*) or sections (*Sektionen*). The next level is composed by 114 district organisations (*Bezirksorganisationen*). These district and province organisations send their delegates to the party convention (*Parteitag*), which is the central decision making body. There, the following organs are elected: the party leader, his deputy (both represent together the presidium) and the executive committee of the party (*Parteivorstand*). This executive committee is composed of 70 members, whose duty is to manage the party affairs. They are accountable to the party convention. The party convention also decides the statutes and the basic party programs.

With regard to the election of the candidates for the European Parliament, the 9 *Landesorganisationen*⁴⁰⁷ (federal state branches) have the right to add names to the list of candidates. This list is submitted to a secret vote by the *Parteirat* (party council) on request by the *Parteivorstand* (party executive committee).⁴⁰⁸ Yet, this request is filed by the

⁴⁰⁶ Taken from the SPÖ webpage, URL <http://www.spoe.at/page.php?P=100474> (28.12.2008)

⁴⁰⁷ Austria is composed by 9 *Bundesländer* or federal territories; therefore the SPÖ is also parted into the corresponding 9 territories.

⁴⁰⁸ Article 18 section 6 of the party statutes

Parteipräsidium (party presidium) which also prepares the list. The EP candidates are elected secretly by simple majority.

The only regulations related to the criteria to be applied when selecting suitable candidates refer to the gender balance. In accordance with these regulations, at least 40% of the candidates have to be male or female. And of course they need to be members of the SPÖ. Should a seat in the European Parliament be left vacant during a legislation period, the Party Executive Committee is to decide on a substitute only after having consulted the *Bundesfrauenorganistaion* (Federal Women's Branches) on the issue of replacement.

As for the role played by the European delegates in these procedures, it seems to be necessary to look at their participation in respective party organs and in the party decision-making. In the case of the SPÖ, the European delegates are neither represented in any major party organ, nor included in the decision-making processes. The *Bundesparteitag* (federal party convention) constitutes an exception where the European delegates have the status of "guests" with a solely advisory role. But the EP delegates can be elected into the executive committee of the party, but according to the statutes, they are not meant to have a permanent seat. They can also hold posts in other party organs at the provincial or district level.

The interview with a SPÖ member revealed that people usually do not apply to become a candidate for the European Parliament. Instead, potential candidates are identified and asked by the Party to run for the elections. Overall, there have been very few requests to become a candidate so far. The interview partner also stated that the selection of candidates was a difficult task and, to some extent, also posed a challenge as many interests had to be taken into account, especially those of the groups in the federal states. The fact that only those listed at the top of the candidate lists had a real chance of being elected further exacerbated the competition for these promising list positions. Asked for the influence of the European Socialists, the SPÖ politician said that there was no real interference by the aforementioned group in the selection proceedings. Sometimes these groups only asked the candidates to introduce themselves. The support from the European Socialist's also depended on the performance of the EP delegates in the Parliament.

The same politician pointed out that he ran for the election because of interest in the European project and the desire to contribute to something new. In addition, it seems to be a strategy to escape the daily inter-party struggles, which has also been confirmed in the interviews with the Journalists. At the same time, the interview partner maintained that membership in the European Parliament did not attribute much value in the Party. Moreover, some party members had been critical towards his candidature while others had offered support.

The SPÖ delegates to the EP are Maria Berger (since 1996 with a short interruption), Herbert Bösch (since 1995), Wolfgang Bulfon (since 2007), Harald Ettl (since 1996), Jörg Leichtfried (since 2004), Christa Prets (since 1999) and Hannes Swoboda (since 1996). These EP delegates have different careers and backgrounds, some have been party members since their twenties, and others joined the Party later. They (2 women, 5 men) come from 6 (out of 9) different provinces and from different branches of the SPÖ, including the workers chamber, the trade union, the national assembly, local councils and the private sector (etc.).

Austrian People's Party (ÖVP, Österreichische Volkspartei)

The People's Party consists of 9 province organisations, 6 specialised organisations (e.g. the farmers union or the economic union) and 3 others. The federal party organs⁴⁰⁹ are the federal party convention (*Bundesparteitag*), the federal executive party committee (*Bundesparteivorstand*) and the federal presidium (*Bundesparteipräsidium*). The party convention is the highest ranking decision making organ.

The specialised organisations are entitled to take part in the process of selecting candidates for the elections. There is no article comparable to one in the SPÖ statute envisaging an obligatory gender balance on the list of candidates. Overall, the decision on the final list rests with the executive party committee.

The candidates of the ÖVP are nominated and ranked by the *Bundesparteivorstand* (Article 46 (4) of the ÖVP statutes). This organ is responsible for the general coordination within the party as well as for agenda setting and implementation. Thus, it can be seen as one of the most important party organs. According to an internal informal rule, the candidates for the first two places on the list are nominated by the head of the ÖVP only while the remaining candidates are nominated in cooperation with the other members of the *Bundesparteivorstand*. The nomination of candidates is a highly informal procedure. In other words, the most powerful federal branches within the party structure dominate the outcome. As a consequence, it is possible that in a campaign the first 10 positions on the list are staffed with people from only 3 or 4 out of the nine federal states. Actually, the representation of the single federal states in the candidate list also correlates with the extent of their representation in the government. Other branches of the party such as the *Bauernbund* (Farmers Union) play an important role in the candidate selection, too.

Unlike the SPÖ, there are far more people in the ÖVP who apply to become a candidate. At the same time, the Party also asks others to run for the elections. It was a good mixture of both, said the interview partner from the ÖVP.

The European People's Party has some influence on the national candidate list, but in a rather informal way. Due to the regular meetings between the European and the national People's Party leaders or high officials, there is indeed some communication enabling the first to state wishes and remarks with regard to the nomination of candidates.

The European Parliamentarians seem to have a more important role in the ÖVP than in the SPÖ as can be shown by the following. In the case of the ÖVP, the European Parliamentarians are allowed to vote in the federal party convention (Art. 23 (1c)) and their Head of Delegation at the EP is also member to the federal executive party committee.

The interviewed ÖVP member explained that he had been asked to run for the elections because he had been responsible for European issues before. He added that he had been interested in the post because he had thought it was an important job and because of the

⁴⁰⁹ The ÖVP has more party organs on a province and other levels.

opportunities and challenges membership in the EP entailed. His running as a candidate was seen as being widely positive and useful.

The ÖVP delegates are Othmar Karas (since 1999), Reinhard Rack (since 1995), Agnes Schierhuber (since 1995), Paul Rübig (since 1996), Richard Seeber (since 2004), Hubert Pirker (since 1996 with a 2 year interruption). These 6 delegates (1 woman, 5 men) come from 5 different provinces. They also have different careers, ranging from two delegates with an academic background (Rack and Pirker worked as professors in Universities) to delegates who have been working since their early ages for the party at different levels or in different province organisations. In comparison to the SPÖ, one thing is striking: nearly all the ÖVP delegates have been in the EP since the mid 1990s, while the SPÖ team has only a few delegates who have been members to the EP ever since Austria sent delegates to the EP the first time. This could be interpreted in two ways: Firstly, the ÖVP might have decided that the delegates have been doing a good job and have become familiar with the system and should thus not be replaced by newcomers. Secondly, it can also be interpreted in a less positive way arguing that the delegates stick to their posts and do not give other (maybe younger) candidates the opportunity to work in Brussels. Interestingly enough both teams of delegates have an average age of 56.

Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ, Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs)

The structure of the FPÖ is similar to the already mentioned parties, there are 9 province organisations and 9 “forefront organisations”, but they do not play the role that the specialised organisations of the ÖVP have. The party has 12 organs; the major ones are the federal party convention (*Bundesparteitag*), the federal party administration (*Bundesparteileitung*), the federal executive party committee (*Bundesparteivorstand*) and the federal presidium (*Bundesparteipräsidium*). The federal executive party committee is elected every two years by the federal party convention, and all functions rest with the committee insofar as the statutes do not assign certain duties to another organ.

In the FPÖ, the organ that puts together the list of candidates for the European Parliamentary election is the federal executive party committee.⁴¹⁰ The candidates are nominated by one of the party organs in the party or by the head of the party. The *Bundesparteivorstand* is the only forum where the discussions on the list of candidates take place. From the EP side or from the side of other parties at the European level, there is no influence. The election of the EP candidates is in general kept secret. However, there can also be an open voting. Commonly, the candidates are elected with simple majority. There is also no article comparable to the one in the SPÖ statutes that envisages an obligatory gender balance.

The role of the European Parliamentary delegates in the FPÖ is even more prominent than in the other two parties presented above. The leader of the EP delegates is part of the following organs: *Bundesparteivorstand* and the *Bundesparteipräsidium*. All the EP delegates

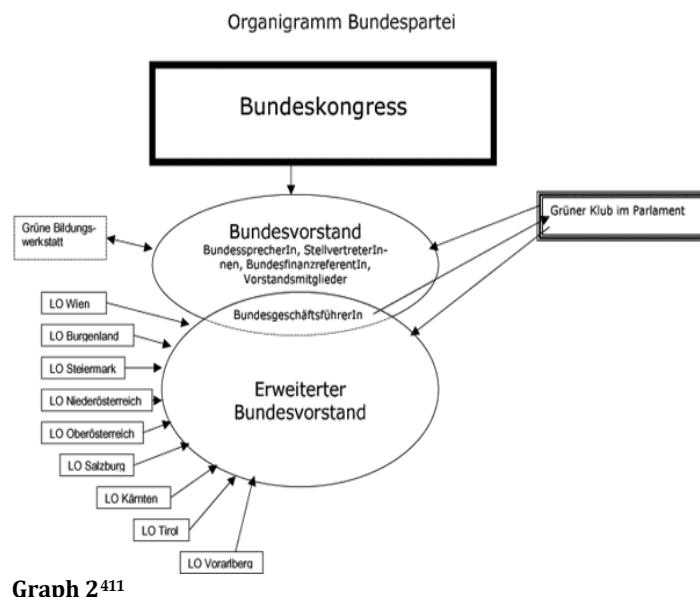
⁴¹⁰ Party Statutes Artikel 14 (8)

are further more members to the federal party administration and the *Bundesparteitag*. They have a seat and a vote in the most important party organs.

The interview partner from the FPÖ stated that he had been interested in International Relations and European Studies for a long time, and since 1994, he had been expressing interest in related tasks and duties. When he succeeded in becoming a candidate for the EP, his candidature was not perceived positively. The FPÖ politician also made a very interesting remark that supports the view that EP delegates play an important role in the FPÖ. He said that it was of great advantage being a rather small to middle size party, because your voice as an EP delegate was heard in the party and its organs. He was much more involved in internal decision making and agenda setting. He also expected the EP to become more important over the next years, which means that the delegates will also become more important. A very interesting observation was that due to the physical absence from Austria and the main work being done in Brussels and Strasbourg, it was difficult to keep up with daily party internal business, and the danger of losing political weight inside your party was more than probable. This was especially the case for the EP delegates from the SPÖ, he said.

Since 2004 Andreas Mölzer has been the FPÖ delegate to the EP. He has a background as a journalist and the publisher of a newspaper called "Zur Zeit". He fulfilled other tasks in the party before. The abovementioned average age for the delegates is also true for Mr. Mölzer, who is 56 years old.

The Greens (Die Grünen)



The political party *Die Grünen* is divided into 9 autonomous provincial organisations and one so called tenth federal province for ethnic minorities. At the federal level, the following organs –amongst others – are responsible for the political and organisational coordination:

⁴¹¹ <http://www.gruene.at/partei/bundesvorstand/> (18.12.2008)

the federal congress (*Bundeskongress*), the federal executive committee (*Bundesvorstand*), the extended federal executive committee (*erweiterter Bundesvorstand*), and the federal convention (*Bundestagung*). The federal congress is the highest ranking organ regarding decision making. In article No. 7.3, the party statutes say that in all organs and available functions parity between men and women is to be achieved. However, an imbalance favouring women is regarded as desirable.

The list of candidates is prepared by the extended federal executive committee, which has to be elected by the federal congress with a 2/3 majority. *Die Grünen* elect their candidates at the *Bundeskongress*, which is the organ that can be compared to a general assembly.⁴¹² *Die Grünen* consider themselves as a so-called broad-basis democratic party and may therefore have less organs when compared to other parties. Nevertheless, there is one big organ – the federal congress – where all important decisions are taken and where the entire party with all its different wings is represented.

The creation of the list of candidates is therefore also different from the above mentioned examples. *Die Grünen* issue internal advertisements before starting their campaign and everybody can run for a nomination as a candidate. Some, of course, try to find supporters for their application. Eventually, the nominees are subjected to a hearing at the *Bundeskongress*, where the candidates to run for the elections are elected.⁴¹³

The EP delegates have a seat and a vote in the *Bundeskongress* and the *Bundestagung* (federal convention). If there is more than one EP delegate, they have to elect a representative that is to participate in the *Bundesvorstand* and in the *Erweiterter Bundesvorstand* (extended federal executive committee). So, basically, the EP delegates are represented in every party organ.

Regarding the influence of the European Greens, the interview partner from *Die Grünen* first stated that there was no such influence. But then she admitted that wishes and remarks related to the candidates were communicated through informal channels. The interviewed person, who unfortunately was not an EP delegate, but a high ranking party official, said that *Die Grünen* in general had a very positive attitude towards the EU. Though, as they did not agree with many issues, they saw the work in the EP as a great challenge and as a great opportunity at the same time. She also emphasised that in her party people were being encouraged to go to Brussels, because in the end, it was where the future lay. The interview partner also underlined that the candidates for the EP were people who were interested in and had to do with the subject. Yet, people from other fields might be nominated as a candidate as well.

The delegates of *Die Grünen* are Johannes Voggenhuber (since 1995) and Eva Lichtenberger (since 2004). Both delegates held different posts in the party and also in the national assembly. Mr. Voggenhuber is a founding member of the party. The already mentioned observation regarding the average age of 56 can be confirmed in the case of these two delegates.

⁴¹² Article 8.10 (c) of the party statutes

⁴¹³ For the upcoming election *Die Grünen* had 42 applicants!

Comments

The work in the EP itself is seen by all interviewed persons as highly important, but almost all of them admit that their own parties do not assign sufficient attention and importance to this institution. The same is true for the media and, of course, for the public. Almost all interviewed politicians agreed that the communication between Brussels and Austria had to be improved on all levels and that a clear commitment to European integration and EU institutions was required.⁴¹⁴ Apart from this, many of the EP delegates seem to have the feeling of been left alone by their national parties. This general impression was also confirmed by some newspaper articles on the EU and Austrian policy. One for example put it quite bluntly saying that the times of a politician committed to the European idea like Alois Mock who had a broader view and was not restricted in his thinking, were gone.⁴¹⁵ The same article also said that many pro-European personalities in Austrian parties were withdrawing from politics.

Especially the SPÖ seems to be internally torn between a pro-European wing and a highly European sceptical wing. While some of the high ranking personalities wanted a member of their party to be nominated as a candidate for the EU Commission, others were against it fearing this could jeopardize their EU critical path.⁴¹⁶

One of the interview partners made an interesting remark when he stated that one lost track of the happenings at home and thus also lost influence when working in Brussels. Given the physical absence from the headquarters, the delegates were not able to respond to intrigues in their own parties. This statement was confirmed by an article found some days later in the newspaper.⁴¹⁷

The selection process itself – as already mentioned – seems to be a delicate issue for some of the parties. None of the interview partners really spoke about the informal communication or the steps taken prior to the official nomination. Moreover, one could argue that most of the parties in Austria do not attribute much importance to the elections to the European Parliament. This might have various reasons. This could, for example, be due to the lack of interest on the part of the public or due to a lack of information on the role of the EU and its institutions. Furthermore, the impression left behind is that in some cases the EP is seen as a place to outsource unwanted party officials. Besides, as one interview partner openly admitted, the EP delegates from the smaller parties seem to be embedded in their national parties much better than those from the bigger parties. Another interview partner stated that the media should report more extensively and more often about the delegates, their

⁴¹⁴ See also article in Der Standard, EU Abgeordnete von SPÖ und ÖVP fordern aktive Pro-Europapolitik, 18. November 2008, URL <http://derstandard.at/druck/?id=1226397081337>

⁴¹⁵ Mayer, Thomas, Österreichs EU-Kurs vor einer Zeitenwende, Der Standard, 02. Dezember 2008, <http://derstandard.at/druck/?id=1227287635736>

⁴¹⁶ Weissensteiner, Nina, Nichts ist klar, Frau Kommissar, Der Standard, 08. Jänner 2009, <http://derstandard.at/druck/?id=1231151240812>

⁴¹⁷ Böhm, Wolfgang, Europäischer Frontkampf ohne Rückendeckung, Die Presse, 15. January 2009, <http://diepresse.com/home/politik/eu/444224/print.doc>

work and duties and what this meant for Austria. But he also admitted that this would also require a change of mind on the part of the media and other actors from an Austria-centric to a Euro-centric view. He doubted that this would happen anytime soon.

The interviews with two journalists (out of 5 asked) revealed a very multi-facetted and interesting picture. Different trends seem to be influencing the selection procedure for EP candidates. On the one hand there is still the old habit of sending politicians to the EP that are approaching the end of their career, or have fallen in disgrace or just want to leave and try something new. On the other hand, parties are realising that the EP will grow in its importance for the EU, they will probably get more attention from the public and therefore parties try to balance between men and women as well as young and old people. Besides on-topic education and experience seem to become criteria in order to be nominated. It might be related to the fact, that certain issues dealt with in the EP are highly complicated and specific.

Regarding the qualifications, the journalist were of different opinion, while one said that there was no real professional qualification needed; the other interview partner said, that this might be valid for the last and maybe also this election, but not for the future.

The selection process was seen as not very democratic and not very transparent except the procedure within *Die Grünen*, this impression is underlined by the fact that in some parties it is the business of the party leadership to decide on the first positions on the lists of candidates nominated by the parties. Another interesting phenomenon is that the parties – especially the bigger ones – relied on famous people as a so called top seller for the election. One journalist also said, that often the candidates where chosen as the following: "We need somebody, didn't you know Mr. Smith? Do you think we could get him to run for the election?"

One additional point that needs to be mentioned is that due to party structures, many interests need to be balanced and met, may it be from the federal party organs, women's groups or other interest groups.

It was confirmed that the communication between the EP delegates and Austria needed to be improved. Besides, one Journalist said that "It is important to work towards a change in mind by recognizing Europe as a part of Austria as well as the other way round and not seeing Europe as something alien." The journalists said that they doubted that the European parties or interest groups had influence on the nomination process in Austria.

Conclusion

All parties analysed here have formal regulations regarding the election and nomination processes within the parties. The major difference between the party selection processes can be summarised as follows: If the EP is seen as important, the candidates present themselves and they are integrated into party organs. The selection rules in the statutes give no hint as to how important or not the selection is, moreover it can be seen as the manifestation of different ideologies and traditions. However, many interests from within the parties have to

be taken into account when setting the list and the election of candidates is only in case of the Greens submitted to voting by a broader party base.

Some see the mandate in Brussels as a way to escape, others as a way to prove themselves. For publicity reasons some candidates are not party officials, but well known people from the media or other parts of life. By doing so, political parties hope to increase rather low interest in EP elections. Ursula Stenzel, a prominent anchorwoman stood for the ÖVP in recent years. So called "*Quereinsteiger*" (career changer) as Mrs Strenzel was, have the advantage that they are well known public figures. It is less about the message they convey, but rather about the fact that a prominent public figure might attract more people to participate in the elections.

Sometimes these prominent figures serve as flagships. This was for instance the case with Hans-Peter Martin, then a prominent author and journalist who had disclosed various deficiencies of the system. Martin was put on the top of the list of candidates of the SPÖ. However, after the elections, while Martin expected to head the SPÖ delegation, he was soon replaced by the experienced Hannes Swoboda; Mr. Martin left the party and became a so called "wild delegate". Ms. Resetarits, who ran for Mr. Martins List in 2004 has also been a know TV presenter.

EP candidates are in general not very present in the media. Therefore, they are not worn out and can stay for two or three periods in the EP. This has the positive effect that the delegates get the chance to get to know the EP and the EU system better and also become acquainted with new topics. But voters often do not know who the EP delegates are, what their work consists of and how this work affects their country. Therefore, the elections are misused as a payoff or protest again national issues or against the ruling parties. There are only short campaigns under the slogan of saving the taxpayers money. But the reasons lay rather in the just mentioned point, that there is nothing to win. European elections are "exploited" as a way of punishing parties or protesting against national issues.

Besides, the EU is "far away" and the parties do not have much to win with these elections. Even scientific research on the subject of European elections has not been promoted so far. Overall, the internal candidate finding procedures lack some kind of dedication.

A short outlook: One huge problem that the candidates running for the EP election in the next months have to face is that nearly all are emphasising their EU sceptical or critical point of view, the only real pro-European party left is the ÖVP. But regarding the latest outcomes in opinion polls the Austrians are not so EU critical as they used to be, therefore some commentators are predicting that for example *Die Grünen*, which have been traditionally pro-European, will lose many votes of their European friendly voters to the ÖVP, because they will not approve the change in direction, which has been taken by the party and can also clearly be seen on the candidates list, where the prominent pro-European Green delegate Johannes Voggenhuber has been replaced by Ulrike Lunacek.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁸ See also, Böhm, Wolfgang, Europawahl 2009: Der Wettkampf der EU-Skeptiker, Die Presse, 29.12.2008, <http://diepresse.com/home/politik/eu/440684/print.doc>

POLAND

Choice of parties as a research subject

The choice of the parties approached in the research was based on the support for the political parties in the last national general elections that took place in the autumn of 2007 and the level of current support for the parties according to recent opinion polls published.

The parties approached are the four parties that won seats in the 2007 general elections: Civic Platform of the Republic of Poland – won 41,51%, Law and Justice – 32,11%, Coalition Elections Committee the Left and the Democrats (composed of Left Democratic Alliance as a leading force, Social-democracy of the Republic of Poland, Democratic Party – demokraci.pl and Labour Union) and enjoy the highest public support in recently conducted opinion polls (see: Annex 1). Apart from these four parties that won the seats earlier in the EP of the 6th term (Civic Platform – 24,10%, Law and Justice - 12,67%, Left Democratic Alliance – Labour Union coalition – 9,35%, Polish People's Party – 6,34%) four other parties won mandates in 2004 EP elections, namely Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland – 10,78%, League of Polish Families – 15,92%, Social-Democracy of the Republic of Poland⁴¹⁹ – 5,33%, Freedom Union – 7,33%. These parties however have been rather marginalized since the last national parliamentary elections (comp. Annex 1) and there is little likelihood of their winning seats in the forthcoming EP elections.

Legal Bases

Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2nd April, 1997⁴²⁰. Article 11 of the Constitution guarantees the freedom for the creation and functioning of political parties. According to the Constitution political parties shall be founded on the principle of voluntariness and upon the equality of Polish citizens, and their purpose shall be to influence the formulation of the policy of the State by democratic means. The Article also stipulates that the financing of political parties shall be open to public inspection. Indirectly, the Constitutional Law list also part of the posts and functions incompatible with the EP deputy mandate⁴²¹.

The Act of 27th June of 1997⁴²² on political parties, which sets the rules for: a) the structures and functioning of the political parties, b) political parties registration, c) finances and financing of political parties, d) compatibility of parties activities and objectives with the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, e) liquidation of political parties, f) penalties for improper conduct of parties' activities.

⁴¹⁹ the party has registered for 2009 EP elections a coalition electoral committee "Centre-left" with Democratic Alliance (Stronnictwo Demokratyczne) and Greens 2004 (Zieloni 2004).

⁴²⁰ as published in *Dziennik Ustaw* (*Journal Laws of the Republic of Poland*), 1997, No. 78, item 483

⁴²¹ see: point III. D.

⁴²² *Dziennik Ustaw*, 1997, No. 98, item 604, with later amendments: *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2001, No. 79, item 857, No. 154, item 1802, *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2002, No. 127, item – 1089, *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2003, No. 57, item 507, *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2004, No. 25, item 219, No. 273, item 2708, *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2005, No. 167, item 1398

The Act of 23rd January of 2004 on elections to the European Parliament⁴²³, regulating the principles and methods of the conduct of elections to the European Parliament in the Republic of Poland, and conditions for holding the mandate of a deputy to the European Parliament, its expiration and forfeit⁴²⁴. In the light of President's referral⁴²⁵ of the amendment to the law to the Constitutional Tribunal, the 2009 elections will be held according to the Law in its current wording without changes adopted as amendment by both houses of the Parliament in February 2009⁴²⁶. The presidential order on holding the elections was announced on 9 March 2009 together with the number of MEPs to be elected in the Republic of Poland. According to the President's statement during a press conference⁴²⁷ the voting will take place on 7th June and 50 MEPs will be elected in the Republic of Poland, while the electoral calendar is open after the Presidential order is officially published in *Dziennik Ustaw*⁴²⁸.

The Act of 12 April 2001⁴²⁹ on elections to the Sejm and the Senate of the Republic of Poland – the law regulating among others certain specific rules regarding the submission of the lists of candidates by means of the cross references in the Act on elections to the European Parliament.

⁴²³ *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2004, No. 25, item 219, with later amendments: *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2006, No. 218, item 1592, *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2007, No. 25, item 162, No. 112, item 766; consolidated version published by the Chancellery of the Sejm, dated: 4 April 2007.

⁴²⁴ The newest amendment to the discussed Act relating to 2009 EP elections is currently in the course of legislative process in the form of the Act amending the laws: on election of the President of the Republic of Poland, the law on nation-wide referendum and the law on elections to the European Parliament, which was adopted by the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on 12th February 2009, accepted by Senate on 18th February 2009 and was subject to countersignature by the President (see: footnote 6). Main amendments to the Act on elections to the European Parliament included in amending law referred to the Constitutional Tribunal and relevant for this report are:

- as regards the number of deputies to be elected: the hitherto number of MEPs is replaced by the following: "in the Republic of Poland the deputies to the European Parliament are elected in the number set out by the European Union laws" (amended Article 3);
- as regards the polling day and polling hours: voting shall take place during two days: a non-working day and the preceding day (amended Article 10), the amendment also specifies the polling hours (including the rules for the so-called "close election wards" - hospitals, pensioner's homes, penitentiary institutions, etc.; as well as those organized aboard Polish ships or abroad (Article 106); the law introduces also the changes relating to publication of the voting results as implied by introduction of two-voting-days rule;
- as regards the voting procedures the amending law introduces the possibility of voting by proxy in case of persons with disabilities and voters over 75 years of age (including EU citizens recognized as disabled by relevant laws of the country of origin) – with exception for "closed election wards" and election wards held aboard Polish ships and abroad (amended and extended Articles 106 and 108 as well as amended articles 128, 131, 164).

⁴²⁵ request for ruling on compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of the Law of 12 February 2009 amending the laws: on election of the President of the Republic of Poland, the law on nation-wide referendum and the law on elections to the European Parliament, source official website of the President of the Republic of Poland, www.prezydent.pl, downloaded on 9 March 2009.

⁴²⁶ see: footnote 7.

⁴²⁷ *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily after Polish Press Agency, PAP, on 9th March 2009, www.gazeta.pl.

⁴²⁸ *Dziennik Ustaw*, No 37, item 287 of 10 March 2009.

⁴²⁹ *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2001, No. 46, item 499 with later amendments.

General rules governing the EP elections

Electoral system – proportional representation; allocation of seats: nation-wide distribution of seats between electoral committees according to d'Hondt method (lists passing the 5% threshold) – Article 127, later distribution of seats to winning lists in constituencies – with the use of the Hare-Niemeyer's method – Article 129. Number of constituencies for EP elections – 13⁴³⁰.

Right to vote – defined by Article 7 – belongs to every citizen of Poland aged at least 18 on the polling day except of those: deprived of public right by a final ruling of a court, deprived of electoral rights by final ruling of the Tribunal of State, deprived of legal capacity by final ruling of a court. Article 8 grants also the right to vote to EU citizen, aged minimum 18, being permanent resident of the Republic of Poland and registered in Voter Register (on condition that the person is not deprived of electoral rights in EP elections in the country, of which he or she is a citizen). According to the current wording of the Act on elections to the European Parliament no advance voting, neither voting by post, nor voting by proxy⁴³¹ is possible.

Right to stand for elections – according to Article 9 of the above law – a person is eligible to stand for elections if he or she has the right to elect deputies to the European Parliament in Poland and has reached the age of at least 21 years on the day of the vote, has not been punished for a crime committed intentionally and prosecuted by indictment, and is a resident of the Republic of Poland or of another Member State of the European Union for the minimum period of 5 years (with the exclusion of those deprived of right to stand for elections by a final ruling of a court). **Electoral rolls**: general rule: the electoral rolls are established by commune offices according to permanent residents' register at the latest on the 14th day before the date of elections (other rules apply to those abroad, aboard Polish ships, mobility challenged, servicemen in military and other units engaged outside place of permanent residence, hospital and social institutions patients as well as those in correction institutions) – Articles 32-41, regulating electoral rolls.

Incompatibilities – by virtue of Article 5 the mandate of the EP deputy cannot be performed jointly with the functions and posts incompatible with the MEP functions as stipulated by EU laws. According to Article 6 of the Polish EP electoral law the mandate of the EP deputy cannot be performed simultaneously neither with the mandate of the Sejm deputy or the mandate of a senator. By virtue of the same article, during his term of office the EP deputy cannot be a member of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland nor a Secretary of State and cannot occupy any posts or fulfil any functions which are incompatible with the mandate of deputy or senator in Poland – according to the relevant provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (Article 103).

Proclamation of elections – as stipulated by Article 10 the elections are announced by the President of the Republic by means of order, issued not later than 90 days before the polling day, a non-working day within the election period set by EU law. According to Article 11

⁴³⁰ see Annex 2 – list of constituencies for EP elections.

⁴³¹ voting by proxy was planned to be introduced in amendment to the act on EP elections; see: footnote 7.

The President's order is published in Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland (*Dziennik Ustaw*) on the 5th day after the proclamation at the latest. The proclamation contains the election calendar (including the deadlines for completion of election procedures) and the number of deputies to the European Parliament to be elected in Poland. By means of the same Article, the State Electoral Commission shall publish in the form of an announcement the proclamation along with information on electoral constituencies, as well as locations of constituency electoral commissions not later than on the 14th day from the proclamation.

Registration of candidates/Electoral Committees – According to Article 47 the right to submit lists of candidates in the EP elections belongs to voters and political parties with the latter equipped with the right to form coalitions submitting joint lists of candidates⁴³². The electoral procedures are conducted on behalf of political parties, coalitions and voters by electoral committees, which in particular submit the lists of candidates and conduct the electoral campaign on behalf of the respective parties, coalitions and voters' groupings. In the case of the voters committees they may be formed by at least 15 voters supported in writing by at least 1000 voters wishing a committee to be formed (the support of 1000 voter constitutes the condition for notification of a voters electoral committee to the State Electoral Commission). In the case of political parties committees, coalitions' committees and voter's electoral committees the notification on establishment of a committee to the State Electoral Commission should take place on the 50th day before the election date at the latest (Articles 49-51). The registration of the lists of candidates is regulated by Chapter 9 of the Act (Articles 59 -71). By virtue of Article 9 an electoral committee can submit in a constituency one list only with the number of candidates between 5 and 10. A candidate can stand for elections in one constituency and from one list only, while the parties forming an electoral coalition cannot submit list of candidates in constituencies on their own. A constituency list has to be supported in writing by at least 10 000 voters with permanent residence in the relevant constituency (a voter can support more than one list of candidates in a constituency). The committee which has registered the duly supported lists in at least half of the total number of constituencies can register further lists without voters' support in writing. The registration of constituency lists by eligible committees takes place on the basis of certificate issued by the State Electoral Commission and the lists can be submitted (with relevant accompanying documentation) to regional electoral commissions for registration no later than at 24.00 hrs on the 40th day before the polling day (Article 63). No deposit is required for standing in the elections.

Electoral campaign/media support – the campaign commences on the day of proclamation of the presidential order calling the elections and ends 24 hours before the polling day on the territory of the Republic of Poland (Article 73). The election committees have the right to conduct the electoral campaign in Polish television and radio: in the form of electoral programmes and electoral announcements. The right to disseminate electoral information in Poland-wide channels is granted for the election committees registered in at least 9 constituencies and in regional channels for the election committees registered in at least 1 constituency. Total time of elections programs broadcasted by Public Television and Radio available for each of the eligible committees amounts to: a) 15 hours on nation-wide channels of Polish Television Joint-stock Company between 17.00 and 23.00 hours; b) 20

⁴³² a party can be a member of only one electoral coalition (Article 50).

hours on Polish Radio Joint-stock Company; c) on each of the regional channels of Polish TV Joint-stock Company – 10 hours and 20 hours in regional radio companies (Article 78).

Financing electoral campaign. According to Article 83 the financing of the election campaign shall be transparent, the electoral committee can only raise and spend the funds for election purposes (Article 85) while the funds of elections committee of a party can only derive from Electoral Funds of parties established according to the Act on political parties⁴³³ (also in case of coalition committees). The voters' electoral committees can receive funds from individuals only (excluding those residing outside Poland, with the exception for Polish citizens residing in other EU Member States and excluding as well non-EU citizens residing in Poland). Electoral committees may neither receive in-kind contributions except for free of charge services in distributing posters and brochures by persons other than entrepreneurs nor can they receive any funds from abroad (Article 86). Public collections of funds by electoral committees and transferring of funds between electoral committees is prohibited by means of Article 87. A party cannot spend more than 0.3 Polish Zloty per each voter included in the voters register (Article 89) and any surplus funds raised must be transferred by electoral committee to the party Electoral Fund, in case of coalition committees to relevant parties or to a charity, while in case of voters' electoral committees any surplus of funds (including budgetary allowance – see below) over spending shall be transfer to a charity (Article 90). By virtue of Article 100 each party whose electoral committee participated in the elections, each party within a electoral coalition and each electoral committee of voters is entitled to receive an allowance for each EP seat win, according to the following formula:

$$Dp = \frac{W}{L} \times M$$

where: Dp is the amount of allocation due, W – amount of PLN equal to the number of electors that voted, L – the number of MEPs elected in Poland and M – the number of seats won by the given electoral committee. The allocation may not exceed the sum of spending on the electoral campaign (Article 100) stated in financial report submitted by financial plenipotentiary of an electoral committee to the State Electoral Commission within four months from the election day (Article 93).

Publication of results by the State Electoral Commission - after the establishment of the lists of candidates elected in constituencies the State Electoral Commission prepares the report on elections to the European Parliament (Article 131), subject to publication in Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland (*Dziennik Ustaw*) – Article 132 and reports to the President of the Republic and the Marshal of the Sejm⁴³⁴ the results of the elections on the 14th day of publication of results at the latest and hands over to the elected deputies the election certificates (Article 133). Immediately after publication of the announcement in the Journal of Laws, the Marshal of the Sejm, submits to the President of the European Parliament a notification on the election of deputies to the European Parliament and other documents required (Article 133, pt. 2).

⁴³³ see: footnote 424.

⁴³⁴ Speaker of the lower house of the Polish Parliament.

Electoral procedures within the parties⁴³⁵

Civic Platform⁴³⁶

Nomination and approval of party candidates for EP deputies

The Statute of the Civic Platform⁴³⁷ contains the following provisions relating to the nomination of the party's candidates in elections to the European Parliament:

Paragraph 55, point 3 listing the exclusive competences of the National Council – in subpoint 3. 3) grants to the National Council of the Civic Platform the exclusive competence for adoption of rules for nomination and approval of Civic Platform candidates in national parliamentary elections, **elections to the European Parliament** and elections to the territorial self-government;

Paragraph 50 – referring to regional structures of the party – in point 3. 5) establishes the competences of the **regional councils of the Civic Platform in submitting candidates** for the bodies of territorial self-territorial in the voivodship as well as candidates to the Sejm, the Senate and **the European Parliament**;

Paragraph 57, point 2. 14) points to the **national executive board** of the Civic Platform as the body competent for the functioning **as the electoral committee** as stipulated in relevant laws concerning the elections to public authorities bodies.

By virtue of Paragraph 55 of the Statute of the Civic Platform the national council of the Civic Platform adopted on 13 February 2009 a **Resolution on the rules for nomination and approval of the candidates for deputies to the European Parliament**.⁴³⁸ On the basis of the document the **national executive board** of the party on 20th February adopted the Resolution on the calendar of electoral procedures related to election and approval of Civic Platform candidate for elections to the European Parliament⁴³⁹.

The documents stipulate jointly that the names of candidates can be submitted by 4th March 2009 to the relevant Presidents of Regional party structures by statutory organs of the party, associations "Young Democrats" and the President of the Civic Platform (only in writing and on the form annexed to the Resolution named above)⁴⁴⁰. According to the information by an interviewed party member candidates are proposed by local units of the party to county organizational units and these submit the proposed candidates to regional party

⁴³⁵ see: Annex 6.

⁴³⁶ Civil Platform – full name in Polish – Platforma Obywatelska Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej [Civic Platform of the Republic of Poland] – party Statute: Paragraph 1 point. 1.

⁴³⁷ adopted by the National Convention of the Civic Platform on 21.05.2006, source: www.platforma.org, accessed on 12th March 2009.

⁴³⁸ source: www.platfroma.org, accessed on 12th March 2009.

⁴³⁹ source: www.platfroma.org, accessed on 12th March 2009.

⁴⁴⁰ the form includes among others the questioner on candidate's education and knowledge of foreign languages, professional carrier record, participation in political parties, activities in NGOs, involvement in self-government and governmental administration, financial declaration, criminal and tax records, candidate's agreement to stand for elections and the declaration on future membership in the EPP as well as the choice of thematic area/s a candidate would like to deal with in case of winning a mandate.

structures⁴⁴¹. The party lists are open to non-members and according to the Paragraph 8. point 3. of the Civic Platform Statute “MPs, Senators and MEPs as well as deputies to regional councils, elected from the lists submitted by the electoral committee of Civic Platform, become members of the Civic Platform automatically after filling in membership declaration ...”. By decision of the National Executive Board of the party although there is no official party ban on standing for elections of self-government elected officials and Senators, they will most probably not be included in the lists of candidates⁴⁴². The same concerns the ministers in the government, which should rather continue their mission in the country rather than seek work in the European Parliament⁴⁴³.

Internal electoral calendar

By 11 March 2009 the regional executive boards of the party adopted resolutions on proposed candidates’ lists⁴⁴⁴. The lists are submitted to the President of the Civic Platform immediately by the Secretary General of the party as an intermediary.

Between 17-20 March 2009 the National Executive Board accepts the lists of candidates or recommends changes.

Between 28-30 March 2009 relevant regional councils by voting take resolution on adoption of lists of candidates for deputies to the European Parliament⁴⁴⁵.

The national council of the Civic Platform approves all constituency lists of candidates on the sitting on 4th April 2009⁴⁴⁶ (by 28 April 2009 24.00 hours the lists according to electoral calendar included in the Presidential order on proclamation of the elections need to be registered – see Annex 4 and point III. F.).

Within the process of establishment of party electoral lists the candidatures are subject to informal discussions, yet all decisions are taken formally, according to the internal party regulations adopted by the competent party organs as stipulated by the Statute⁴⁴⁷. The total

⁴⁴¹ the organisation of the party structures correspond to territorial division of Poland: local level, county level, regional level, national level of party structures.

⁴⁴² party news review of 17 February 2009, source: www.platforma.org, accessed on 13 March 2009.

⁴⁴³ Prime Minister and the President of the Civic Platform, Donald Tusk, quoted by the party news review source: *ibid*.

⁴⁴⁴ in case of constituencies composed of more than one regions the lists are proposed jointly by relevant presidents of regions, in case of no agreement the proposal of the list is adopted by the National Executive Board. Adoption of constituency lists is also collective for several regional party organizations in a constituency. NB: With 16 regions (voivodships) in Poland for EP elections there are four constituencies composed of two voivodships and one voivodship in divided into two separate constituencies.

⁴⁴⁵ in case of non-adoption of resolution on the lists of candidates or rejection of the lists of candidates as proposed by the national executive board, the latter submits the project of a resolution on the given constituency list for approval by the national council of the Civic Platform.

⁴⁴⁶ in case of death of a candidate, resignation from standing in elections, breach of laws by a candidates, breach of internal party regulations, improper conduct of a candidate in public or private life, which affect party’s good name or political interests, the **national executive board can introduce changes in constituency lists on recommendation of the President of the party**.

⁴⁴⁷ interview with Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Vice-President of the Civic Platform, February 2009.

number of candidates to be nominated in 13 constituencies by the Civic Platform is 100 (the maximum total number 13), while the distribution of candidates between constituencies depends on the forecasted number of EP mandates won in a constituency (it is also linked with forecasted turnout in individual constituencies and as a consequence a number of seats allocated to a given constituency).

Election campaign

The election campaign will be officially inaugurated by the Civic Platform on 29-30 April 2009, during the European People's Party Congress taking place in Warsaw. The party officials announced that in the light of the economic crisis the party would limit as far as possible the election advertising and appealed to party members to spend money modestly on the campaign. The party undertakes to access the voters mainly by brochures, leaflets and posters, while the public awareness on EP elections and their importance - in the light of low turnout in 2004 (despite earlier declarations) and relatively low prospects for 2009 turnout⁴⁴⁸ is planned to be raised by meetings and information addressed to voters.

The European Parliament elections and the participation of Civic Platform in EPP-ED group – political priorities

According to the interviewed party member⁴⁴⁹ the European elections were discussed by the party both on forum of EPP and EPP-ED group. The key thematic areas to be raised in the newly elected EP by Civic Platform members are:

- European response to economic crisis
- energy security issues
- foreign and security policy
- Eastern neighbourhood issues
- internal market
- EMU
- cohesion policy.

Consequently, the key thematic areas of the Civic Platform electoral campaign will be:

- European response to economic crisis
- Poland's membership in Euro-zone
- foreign policy and Eastern neighbourhood
- energy security
- cohesion policy and structural funds.

⁴⁴⁸ see: Annex 3.

⁴⁴⁹ see: footnote 449.

Importance of EP mandates vis-à-vis other posts and functions in the perception of Civic Platform members

The most prestigious positions as perceived by the party members, according to the interview, is being the Member of the European Parliament and holding ministerial posts nationally. Only later being a Member of national parliament and a high party official are ranked.

Law and Justice⁴⁵⁰

Nomination and approval of party candidates for EP deputies

The Statute of the Law and Justice⁴⁵¹ contains the following provisions linked with the elections to the elections to the European Parliament:

Article 24, point c) grants to a party member the right to stand for elections to public authorities bodies from the lists submitted by or supported by Law and Justice – according to the decisions of the party authorities;

Article 43 point 1. – enumerating the competences of the Chief Executive Board of the party and among them in subpoint 11) the right to submit the PiS candidates for acceptance of the party's Political Committee in parliamentary elections, EP elections and the presidential elections;

Article 45, point 4. 4) vests in the hands of the Political Committee the competence to establish the lists of PiS candidates in parliamentary elections, EP elections and the presidential elections;

Article 48, point 1.8) – refers to the right of the regional council to submit to the Chief Executive Board the opinions on the PiS candidates in elections to Polish Parliament and to the EP;

Article 55, point 7 f) grants to the district executive boards⁴⁵² the competence to submit the proposals of PiS candidates in national and EP parliamentary elections.

The practical arrangements are conformant with the statutory provisions: the right to submit the candidates officially belongs to the district organizational units, then the district lists serve as bases for establishment of the regional/constituency lists of candidates subject to formal adoption on the central party level.

The candidates in elections are not only the party members but also non-members sharing the political views of the party on conditions of possessing appropriate competences and

⁴⁵⁰ Law and Justice section based on the Statutes, an interview with an anonymous PiS member and on party statements in the media and media news and political commentaries, it was not possible to access the internal documents of the party.

⁴⁵¹ Law and Justice, pl. Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS).

⁴⁵² organisational units on the level of constituencies into which the territory of the country is divided in national general elections and grouping the county level organisations which constitute – according to the Statute - the basic organisational units of the party (Article 61) with (the possibility to establish lower level subordinate units).

adequate skills to hold an EP mandate. According to *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily, quoting an anonymous PiS members the candidates wishing to stand for next self-government elections needs to be also a candidate in EP elections to promote his or her name for the future (except for Warsaw constituency where the candidates lists are reserved for central-level party officials⁴⁵³).

The party rules put a ban on standing for elections of parliamentarians (with a few exceptions) as the next general elections in Poland will take place during the EP's 7th term. As regards the talks and discussions on candidatures informal consultations do take place, however final decisions are of very formal nature and vested in the hands of the Chief Executive Board and the Political Committee.

Party candidates stand for elections in all 13 constituencies. According to the *Dziennik* daily⁴⁵⁴, 6 leaders out of 13 constituency lists leaders are current EP deputies, although the decision of the party's Political Committee and the official lists will be known only after 16th of March⁴⁵⁵.

Internal electoral calendar

The internal calendar, as in the case of other parties follows the electoral law deadlines with the internal regulations being established by party authorities on the national level.

Election campaign

According to the interview the party counts of better turnout results than in 2004, yet apart from the active electoral campaign no extraordinary means are going to be taken to win better participation of voters.

Importance of EP mandates vis-à-vis other posts and functions in the perception of Law and Justice members

According to the interview the most prestigious posts are those of national parliament's deputies, leaving aside the membership in the EP and posts in the high political structures of the party.

The European Parliament elections and the participation of Law and Justice in UEN – political priorities

⁴⁵³ source: *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily, 11 March 2009, www.gazeta.pl, accessed on 12 March 2009.

⁴⁵⁴ *Dziennik* daily on 14 March 2009, after News portal *Wirtualna Polska*, www.wp.pl, accessed on 15 March 2009.

⁴⁵⁵ News portal *Wirtualna Polska*, quoting Wojciech Szarama of PiS, after Polish Press Agency, www.wp.pl, 12 March 2009, accessed 13 March 2009.

As a member of UEN the Law and Justice presents a rather Eurosceptical stance and therefore in its programme documents⁴⁵⁶ supports the idea of improving the position of Poland within EU structures with limiting of federalists tendencies and oversized and equipped with too large competences EU bureaucracy.

The main priorities of PiS of the new EP (also to be followed during the election campaign) will be:

- levelling the standing of new Member States with the Old ones;
- simplification of procedures for implementation of structural funds projects; better chances for regions;
- economic crisis and European response;
- foreign policy – EU military and energy security; cooperation with central European countries and the development of NATO and EU transatlantic relations;
- enlargement of the EU and cooperation with Ukraine.

According to a PiS MEP Adam Bielan, Law and Justice have been conducting intensive talks with the British Conservative Party and Czech ODS party, aimed at the creation of a new, right-wing European party. In light of the prospective secession of the Tories from EPP-ED grouping, the authors of the initiative are to announce the establishment of the new party already in May, before the June elections. Further talks are also conducted with the parties from the Baltic states and the Flemish "Lijst Dedecker"⁴⁵⁷.

Left Democratic Alliance

Nomination and approval of party candidates for EP deputies

The Left Democratic Alliance (acronym SLD⁴⁵⁸), the leading partner of the SLD-Labour Union (Unia Pracy)⁴⁵⁹ coalition established for the purpose of proposing candidates in 2009 EP elections, in its Statute⁴⁶⁰ included the following provisions regarding the nomination of candidates for elections and participation of the party in international associations and political groups:

Article 2. point 2. states that membership of Left Democratic Alliance club at relevant level of organization is not limited to party members. The same is true about the participation in SLD activities - open to non-members as well and about non-members that can become SLD candidates in elections;

⁴⁵⁶ Polska w Europie i na świecie [Poland in Europe and the World], in: Nowoczesna, solidarna i bezpieczna Polska. Program Prawa i Sprawiedliwości, Krakow 2009 [Poland, Modernity, solidarity and security. Law and Justice Programme], Cracow, 2009, source: www.pis.org.pl.

⁴⁵⁷ News portal Wirtualna Polska on 11 March 2009, www.wp.pl, accessed on 16 March 2009.

⁴⁵⁸ Left Democratic Alliance - pl. Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (SLD).

⁴⁵⁹ Labour Union - pl. Unia Pracy (UP).

⁴⁶⁰ source: official website of SLD: www.sld.org.pl, accessed on 12 March 2009.

Article 22. of the Statute includes the provision on the competences of the National Council of the party and in point 1. e) states that the National Council approved the lists of candidates to the Sejm, Senate and to the European Parliament;

Article 23. referring to the National Executive Board of the party in point 1. c) provides that the National Executive Board drafts the party lists of candidates for the Sejm, Senate and European Parliament Elections and in point 1. h) vests on National Executive Board the right to nominate the SLD delegates representing the party in *Socialist International* and the Party of European Socialists;

Article 29. refers to the regional (voivodship⁴⁶¹) councils, which approve – after the agreement with the National Executive Board the lists of candidates to voivodship councils and the candidates for presidents of the cities with county status (point 1.b) and take decisions regarding pre- and post-election agreements;

Article 37: the county councils, after agreement with the relevant regional executive boards, approve the lists of candidates to the county council and the candidates for presidents of cities, majors and wojts (heads of local self-government in communes);

According to the interview⁴⁶² with the Head of the Regional Council of SLD in Lodz, the internal rules included in the Statutes are supported by the following practical arrangements:

- the candidates are proposed by the commune and country party organizations and submitted (in the form of resolution accompanied by the information on the candidate) to the regional executive boards;
- the regional executive boards recommend the candidates in the form of resolutions to the National (without allocating ranks on the lists);
- the National Executive Board approves the lists of candidates and submits the lists to the National Council;
- the National Council approves the entire lists of candidates.

In the course of nomination procedures informal and non-binding talks are conducted with potential candidates for candidates (regarding their readiness to stand for elections and their potential role). Each candidate from the commune level is then officially interviewed at the commune level of party organization and similarly all later decisions are taken formally by competent organs of the party at all levels.

The qualities required from the candidates: a) experience in political, social and self-government activities; b) public support in the relevant nominating community; c) knowledge of foreign languages (mainly English, French or German). The SLD-UP lists are opened to representatives of other then parties members communities sharing however the social-democratic idea, ready to accept the programme of the Party of European Socialists and declaring membership of the PES group in the EP after winning a mandate⁴⁶³.

⁴⁶¹ regional level of territorial division of the country, comp: footnote 24.

⁴⁶² interview with Krzysztof Makowski, Head of the Regional Council of Left Democratic Alliance in Lodz, March 2009.

⁴⁶³ see: footnote 460.

The party recommendation regarding the number of candidates is that in all constituencies the party/coalition with the Labour Union should nominate the maximum number of candidates (10 per constituency).

Internal electoral calendar:

The internal electoral calendar is regulated by the National Electoral Board, established in September 2008 by the National party Council:

by 20 February 2009 – submission of lists of candidates recommended by Regional Council of the party;

by 18 March 2009 – the National Executive Board approves the lists;
final approval of the lists by the National Council takes place by 28 March 2009.

Election campaign

The SLD election campaign will officially open on 18 April 2009 during the Electoral Convention, where the election programme will be present and adopted officially by the Convention. Among the invited guests – who are to contribute to the European character of the campaign – are José Luis Zapatero, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown⁴⁶⁴.

As regards the turnout, the party was one of the proponents of the changes in the electoral law – including the need for two-day-long elections, possibility of voting by proxy and electronic voting which would contribute to better turnout rates.

In connection with the election campaign the party will undertake various actions aimed at raising awareness in importance of the EP elections and increasing the turnout via information in the media and outdoor advertising. One of the points is to make the voters aware that the lower turnout the lower the number of deputies in a constituency. The campaign to the EP is of a specific nature⁴⁶⁵ (compared to other types of elections) and that European Parliament mandates are the ones for those with experience (e.g. former ministers and first-line personalities). Therefore, the party/coalition would promote the people highly motivated to win a mandate and not being novices in politics⁴⁶⁶.

The European Parliament elections and the participation of Left Democratic Alliance in PES group - political priorities

The SLD as a member of PES took part in PES discussions and has involved itself in the PES campaign, whose main priorities are citizens' rights, social and employment policy, and the Lisbon Treaty.

⁴⁶⁴ source: Gazeta Wyborcza daily on 11 March 2009, www.gazeta.pl, accessed on 15 March 2009.

⁴⁶⁵ see footnote 460.

⁴⁶⁶ Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej – Przegląd Wydarzeń [Left Democratic Alliance – News Review], 2 March 2009, No. 23, source: www.sld.org.pl, accessed on 12 March 2009.

As the Electoral Programme will only be officially adopted only on 18 April 2009 by the Electoral Convention as the competent body, the thematic priorities have not been officially presented yet, but the regional priorities have already been formulated already and in the case of Lodz region they are:

- social assistance;
- labour market;
- innovativeness;
- agriculture.

Importance of EP mandates vis-à-vis other posts and functions in the perception of Left Democratic Alliance⁴⁶⁷

From the perspective of the members of the SLD, the most important and prestigious posts are those in the self-government (on commune, county and regional levels) before functions and posts held in the national and European Parliaments.

Polish People's Party⁴⁶⁸

Nomination and approval of party candidates for EP deputies and internal electoral calendar

The PSL Statute contains the following provisions regarding elections (including the elections to the European Parliament):

Article 7 in point i) stipulates that a member of PSL has the right to stand for elections to the Polish and European Parliaments from the lists other than those of PSL (on condition of agreement by Chief Executive Committee of the party);

Article 36 point e) stipulates that county executive boards support the regional executive boards in the electoral actions undertaken within self-government regional elections, parliamentary elections and referenda campaigns;

Article 48 point d) stipulates that the regional executive boards organize the PSL electoral actions undertaken within self-government regional elections, parliamentary elections and referenda campaigns;

Article 61 point 2. addresses the National Electoral Convention of PSL, convened by the Chief Council of PSL and equipped with the competence to approve the candidate for the President of the Republic of Poland, candidates for parliamentarians submitted by the Chief Executive Committee of PSL. Point 4. of the same Article stipulates that prior to the approval of the lists of candidates by the regional conventions, the Chief Executive Committee of PSL submits to these conventions opinions on the parliamentary work of deputies and senators from PSL, holding mandates from relevant regions;

⁴⁶⁷ see footnote 460.

⁴⁶⁸ Polish People's Party – pl. Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL)

Article 67 vests on the Chief Executive Committee of PSL the task of organizing the PSL electoral action in parliamentary and self-government elections as well as in referenda campaigns.

According to the interviewed Chairman of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland⁴⁶⁹, the internal rules included in the Statutes are supported by the following practical arrangements: a) the conditions and procedure for nomination of PSL candidates as well as the rules for financing and calendar of the campaign are provided in the Resolution by the Chief Council of PSL; b) the party bodies responsible for candidates' nomination are: the Chief Executive Committee, regional and county executive boards of the party.

In the light of the years 2009, 2010 and 2011 being electoral years (EP elections, self-government elections, general elections respectively), in 2007 the heads of county-level PSL organisations were already assigned a task to recommend at least one candidate for candidate for the forthcoming elections. A candidate – if not elected for the EP, will stand as a candidate for a regional assembly, a level involved in implementation of European policies.

In the case of the EP elections the nomination procedure and calendar:

the county executive board submits the proposals of candidates to the regional executive board, which establishes the lists of candidates for candidates;
the regional (or in the case of a joint constituencies⁴⁷⁰ - the constituency conventions) take decision on establishment of candidates list, nominating the leader of the list – by 9 March 2009;
the regional lists and their leaders are approved by the National Electoral Convention on 14th March 2009⁴⁷¹.

The party lists are open for non-members representing various social and professional groups and accepting the programme of PSL. PSL attaches importance to having candidates possessing practical skills in shaping regulations in a people-friendly manner. A candidate should:

- present high ethical standards and competences, guaranteeing proper fulfilment of deputy's duties and upholding the party's prestige;
- possess significant achievements in public activity, knowledge of EU issues and foreign languages;
- be ready to undertake actions to the benefit of local communities⁴⁷²;
- present a clean criminal record, present the *lustration* declaration and the declaration of future membership in the EPP group in case of winning an EP mandate⁴⁷³.

⁴⁶⁹ interview with Andrzej Grzyb, a PSL Member and the Chairman of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, March 2009.

⁴⁷⁰ composed of more than one region

⁴⁷¹ during the Convention the party presented all 13 leaders of constituency lists of candidates.

⁴⁷² report from the sitting of the Chief Council of PSL, source: www.psl.org.pl, accessed on 12 March 2009.

⁴⁷³ see: footnote 467.

Although the decision taken already on the county level of party organisation are officially taken in the form of resolution, the informal talks are also undertaken in the form of consultations regarding a potential candidate's involvement in public functions in Poland and the potential consequences of standing in EP elections for the national level as membership in the EP means removing a member from the national political scene.

The party will submit the lists of the maximum number of 10 candidates in all 13 constituencies.

The European Parliament elections and the participation of the Polish People's Party in the EPP group - political priorities

The PSL took part in discussions over the EP elections within the EPP and EPP group in the EP and will take part in the European Congress of the EPP (April 2009 in Warsaw). The political priorities are largely conformant with the EPP priorities with some initiative of the PSL and include mainly:

- the development of subsidiary principle (e.g. towards energy policy);
- security policy (energy security, European defence pillar, ecological safety - climatic package);
- food security and safety and continuation of the CAP beyond 2013 + same level of support for agriculture in all Member States;
- European law-making - aiming at better regulation, development of citizens' activities;
- openness of the EU, enlargement, Eastern neighbourhood;
- economic crisis and European solidarity;
- enlargement of the Euro-zone;
- cohesion policy;
- development of national systems of social assistance to guarantee proper living conditions for pensioners;
- emission of Euro-bonds.

Election campaign

The main topics of the electoral campaign are linked with the above priorities, yet still the topics to be tackled are meant to be addressed directly to the Polish voters, in order to attract citizen's interest and activeness. Therefore the role of the EP and its influence on national politics and the citizens' lives needs to be presented:

- membership in Euro-zone - presentation of pro and contras, conditions for entry, fix exchange rates on entry, etc.;
- better regulation and its impact on sub-national levels;
- security issues and continuation of CAP beyond 2013 (as above);
- economic crisis and European solidarity;
- cohesion policy and levelling of development disparities;
- enlargement.

The general objective in the EP elections campaign will be to develop citizens' activity, innovative economy and efficient institutions with the view to improving conditions in Europe and creating better living conditions in Poland⁴⁷⁴.

The electoral campaign is planned to be modest in terms of spending (economic crisis) and therefore it is mainly planned to be conducted with the use of electronic media, press and to a lesser extent outdoor advertising. An important part of the campaign will also be mobilization of party structures. With regard to the mobilization of voters, the PSL undertakes to present to the voter the role of the EU and its actual impact on the life of citizens, therefore leading to awareness and positive mobilization of citizens also in terms of willingness to take part in the voting⁴⁷⁵.

Importance of EP mandates vis-à-vis other posts and functions in the perception of Polish People's Party⁴⁷⁶

According to the interview in the perception of PSL members, the most important are the national ministerial posts, then Polish parliament membership, followed by EP membership.

Conclusions

Summing up the above analysis of the internal rules and procedures applied by the four main political parties in Poland is it possible to say that:

- in general all parties use the principle of involving sub-national party structures in establishment of constituency candidates lists (bottom up approach with final approval by central/national party structures);
- qualities of the candidates: most parties promote experienced politicians, specialists experienced in EU affairs, with unquestionable moral qualities, knowledge of foreign languages: experts, academics and other well-known personalities – Poles are apt to vote for personalities and therefore the parties tend to nominate first-line names and well know personalities from a constituency (as reliable in the view of citizens); the same is true about central level and a specific Warsaw constituency, where all parties tend to nominate high-ranking party officials (and former ministers) and activists know from the media and partisan activities⁴⁷⁷;
- the party lists of candidates are open to non-members as well, on condition of sharing party political views and willingness to joint relevant EP political groups;

⁴⁷⁴ President of PSL, Waldemar Pawlak, during the National Electoral Convention of PSL on 14 March 2009 in Warsaw, that adopted Electoral Declaration of PSL, source: www.psl.org.pl

⁴⁷⁵ the party was also a proponent of two-day voting for the sake of winning better turnout.

⁴⁷⁶ see: footnote 467.

⁴⁷⁷ Jarosław Flis, "Eurocasting", Tygodnik Powszechny, 12 March 2009.

- all political parties have among their “electoral locomotives” only Polish citizens (the only exception from that rule is a marginal party Union of Real Politics⁴⁷⁸ wishing to nominate a German Witold Bieschke⁴⁷⁹);
- 3 out of 4 main parties interviewed are presenting the maximum number of candidates in all 13 constituencies, while Civic Platform will present ca. 100 candidates distributed among constituencies according to foreseen number of mandates won;
- all parties have their calendars largely based on the electoral calendar established by laws and President’s order on holding the elections, yet all of them treat the EP elections also as a kind of pre-campaign for self-government and presidential elections in 2010 as well as the general (parliamentary) elections in 2011⁴⁸⁰ and the measurement of actual parties support and answer who may really “count” on the political scene in Poland (for e.g. PSL local structures were ordered to search for appropriate candidates that could stand for EP, self-government and parliamentary elections already in 2007);
- in spite of all parties engaging in sub-national levels of party organization in nomination of candidates they all use the “electoral locomotives” as leaders of constituency lists – due to the importance of elections not only for Polish representation in the EP itself but for further success in further political activities, see: above also;
- the thematic areas foreseen to be addressed by parties future MEPs shared by all interviewed parties are in particular: energy security, economic crisis and European response to it, future enlargement and neighbourhood policy (SLD official programme not yet published);
- in view of all parties the 2009 EP electoral campaign has to be less expensive and conducted more with the use of electronic media and less with the use of expensive outdoor advertising.

The main **differences between** the interviewed parties can be observed in respect to: key thematic areas to be tackled during the electoral campaign are largely depending on the expectations of individual parties electorates e.g.:

- from the hitherto announcements SLD and PSL are rather more concerned with social and agricultural issues and the ones more addressing individuals;
- Civic Platform seems to be more preoccupied with global scale European policy;
- Law and Justice seem to be more driven by national interests, Christian values, relations with NATO and the US as well as defence of national interest and Poland’s position within the Union⁴⁸¹.

⁴⁷⁸ Union of Real Politics, pl. Unia Polityki Realnej.

⁴⁷⁹ *Rzeczpospolita* daily on 11 March 2009.

⁴⁸⁰ Jaroslaw Flis for Polish Press Agency, quoted after *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily on 30 December 2009, www.gazeta.pl, accessed on 9 March 2009.

⁴⁸¹ Polska w Europie i na swiecie [Poland in Europe and the World], in: Nowoczesna, solidarna i bezpieczna Polska. Program Prawa i Sprawiedliwosci, Kraków 2009 [Poland, Modernity, solidarity and security. Law and Justice Programme], Cracow, 2009, source: www.pis.org.pl.

Perception of the most prestigious posts and functions: while for the Law and Justice the most important are the mandates in the national parliament the Polish People's Party's preference is on ministerial posts and secondly national parliament's ones before EP mandates for the Civic Platform the most important ones are that in EP and ministerial one and finally for SLD the most important positions are those held in territorial self-government.

With a number of similarities in internal procedures of nomination of candidates and a number of similar programme issues and all major political forces preoccupied with closing up the lists of candidates, the election campaign to the European Parliament is expected to show greater differentiation of ideas, leitmotivs and modes of approaching concrete electorate/voter.

PORUGAL

Introduction

This briefing paper will describe the way in which Portuguese parties select candidates to the European Parliament, and discuss the impact which European parties have had in this selection process. In order to do so we start by presenting very briefly the context of European Parliament (EP) elections in Portugal. This includes a discussion of the electoral system employed and the parties which have run and won seats in the EP elections in Portugal. Next we present the way in which the political parties select the candidates for EP elections, looking at party statutes. In order to complement the information presented in the official documents we will provide information gathered through interviews to MEPs of all the Portuguese parties represented in the EP. In the final section we discuss the relationships which Portuguese parties have with the European parties which they belong to in the EP.

The context of EP elections

European elections have been characterised as “second order elections” (Reif and Schmitt, 1980) where there is “less at stake as compared to first-order national elections”. These elections are predominantly about the political situation of the first-order arena at the moment when it is being held, even if nominally second-order elections are about something quite different (European representation, local affairs etc.) As a result, turnout will be lower in second-order elections; incumbent national parties will do worse; and larger parties will also do worse and smaller parties do better (Eijk and Franklin, 1996). A corollary of the latter is that since smaller parties tend to belong to the extremes of the party system, these will have greater representation in the European Parliament. All premises follow from the secondary nature of these elections, which makes voters less inclined to assume the costs of going to the voting booth, induces them to use these elections to send a warning message to the incumbent government, in order for it to try to improve performance in preparation of the following legislative elections, and also allows electors to “vote with their hearts” rather than tactically for the larger party within their own block as might occur in legislative elections. We will now discuss briefly the electoral system and the results of the EP elections in Portugal to show the extent to which the “second-order” nature of EP elections is visible there.

The electoral system

To some extent, the way in which the nature of second-order elections actually plays out depends in large part on the electoral system employed. Portugal has, since the first EP elections in which it participated, employed the proportional representation (PR) d'Hondt system with only one electoral district, or circle (Law 14/87, art.2). Among the PR formulas

which exist, the d'Hondt is considered one of the least proportional. The total number of elected MEPs elected by the Portuguese electorate has nonetheless varied. In 1987 and 1989 Portugal elected twenty-four MEPs. In 1994 and 1999 it elected twenty-five members to the European Parliament. In 2004 it reverted back to electing twenty-four MEPs. Parties have to present closed lists with fifteen candidate names, and between three and eight replacement candidates (Law no.14/87, art. 7).⁴⁸² In 2006, a "Parity Law" was passed by the Socialist majority in Parliament (Law 3/2006, 21 August), which applies to both EP and national elections. It forces parties to draw up lists which include more women in electable places. Parties cannot place more than two candidates of the same gender in a row. The aim is to have at least 33% representation of each gender on each party lists. This Law will first be enforced in the forthcoming 2009 elections.

Voting rights have also suffered some alterations, with eligibility to vote being increased. From 1994 onwards, Portuguese citizens living elsewhere in the European Community as well as EU citizens with Portuguese residency were allowed to cast their vote for one of the lists presented in Portugal (Directive 93/109/CE). Despite this possibility, relatively few Portuguese citizens living elsewhere in the EU actually voted on that day, a tendency that has been maintained since.

In the Portuguese case, what are the consequences of this election system, on proportionality, vis-à-vis the legislative elections' electoral system? A single electoral district is most conducive to accurate representation, thus increasing proportionality. The single circle lowers the organisational costs associated with running an election with multiple electoral circles, which may benefit the smaller parties as well. Also, since executive power is not at stake, the benefits of being an incumbent will be less important in contesting an election, thus favouring smaller parties. Thus, in the Portuguese case we would expect this difference in district magnitude to improve the smaller parties' chances of success in EP elections. Yet it is worth bearing in mind, that the huge difference in the electoral district size actually makes the number of necessary votes to win an MP much larger in the EP than in the Parliamentary elections.

Legislative Elections		European Elections	
Year	Minimum Nr of Votes Required	Year	Minimum Nr of Votes Required
1985	22,542	1987	229,039
1987	21,622	1989	167,583
1991	24,135	1994	117,991
1995	24,830	1999	134,158
1999	22,766	2004	136,255
2002	23,291		
2005	23,929		

Source: Calculations from CNE (Comissão Nacional de Eleições) data.

Table 1: Minimum Number of Votes Required to Win a Seat in the Legislative and the European Elections in Portugal

⁴⁸² There is incompatibility between being a Member of the European Parliament, and a member of government, or a member of the national parliament (Law 14/87, art.6).

Indeed, the table above shows the minimum number of votes required for parties to win a seat in the legislative election, compared to the minimum number of votes required to win a seat in the EP. This is done by comparing the number of votes necessary in the largest electoral district in the legislative election to win a seat (number of votes cast in the Lisbon district divided by the number of seats allocated in Lisbon in each legislative election) compared to the number of votes needed to win a seat in the EP election (number of votes cast in Portugal divided by the number of seats allocated in the whole of Portugal). The threshold in the EP elections is much higher than in the Lisbon district. This suggests that although voters may well choose with their hearts in EP elections, the smaller parties still face a much higher minimum threshold. Bearing in mind the electoral system context we can now look at the European Parliament election results in Portugal.

EP Elections Results

As has been widely shown, second-order elections tend to have lower participation levels. As can be observed from Table 2, Portugal is no exception. The only exception to the trend of low turnout is the first election, in 1987, which took place on the same day as the legislative elections (Lobo, 2004). If we discount this election, due to its artificial coincidence, in the three subsequent elections turnout was significantly lower than in the preceding legislative elections. In fact, the Portuguese turnout in 1994 was the lowest in the European Union. This was also the lowest value yet, with the 1999 and 2004 turnout rate being slightly higher.

The parties which have won seats are the same ones who dominate the Legislative Assembly in Portugal (see Appendix 1). Since Portugal democratized in 1976 four parties have dominated the country's politics. With the exception of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP- *Partido Comunista Português*), which was founded in 1921, all the others were created shortly before or after 1974. The Socialist Party (PS - *Partido Socialista*) was founded in 1973, the centre-right Social Democratic Party (PSD - *Partido Social Democrata*), and the conservative Social Democratic Center/Popular Party (CDS/PP- *Centro Democrático Social/Partido Popular*) shortly after the April 1974 Revolution. These four parties have averaged 90.6% of the vote over the past thirty years (Lobo, Pinto and Magalhães, 2008). However, the centrist parties, the PS and the PSD, have steadily controlled a larger percentage of parliamentary seats, from the mid-1980s onwards while the Communists and the conservative CDS-PP have been declining. From 1991 onwards, the Communists have allied with a new Green party (*PEV-Partido Ecologista os Verdes*) to form the CDU (*Coligação Democrática Unitária*). The first time this coalition ran for the European Parliament elections was in 1994. The Communists remain the dominant part of this coalition. Finally, in 1999 a new party on the extreme-left of the party system, the Left Block (BE - *Bloco de Esquerda*) managed to enter the national Parliament, and has consolidated its presence since then. This consolidation has been reflected at the EP level, where the BE elected one MEP in the 2004 elections.

Table 2 presents the election results to the EP Parliament. The increased predominance of the large parties which has occurred at the national level is also reflected in the European Parliament results. The PS and the PSD have even gained ground in terms of MEPs since the mid-1980s. Whereas in 1987 they won seventeen seats, the total had risen to 21 in 2004.

Still it is true that smaller parties have - in percentage terms- done better at the EP than at the legislative level.

Year	Turnout	BE	PCP*	PS	PRD	PSD	CDS
1987							
%	72,4		11.5	22.5	4.4	37.6	15.4
Votes	5639650		648,700	1,267,672	250,158	2,111,828	868,718
Mandates			3	6	1	10	4
1989							
%	51,1		14.4	28.5	-	32.8	14.2
Votes	4149756		597,759	1,184,380		1,358,958	587,497
Mandates			4	8		9	3
1994							
%	35,5		11.2	34.9	-	34.4	12.5
Votes	3044001		340,725	1,061,560		1,046,918	379,044
Mandates			3	10		9	3
1999							
%	39,9		10.3	43.1	-	31.1	8.2
Votes	3467085		357,671	1,493,146		1,078,528	283,067
Mandates			2	12		9	2
2004							
%	38,6	4,9	9,1	44.5	-	33,3**	
Votes	3404782	167,313	309,401	1,516,001		1,132,769	
Mandates		1	2	12		9	

* From 1994 onwards the PCP has run a pre-election coalition with the Green party (the PEV) as the CDU (Coalition of Democratic Unity).

** In 2004, the PSD and the CDS ran in a coalition, *Força Portugal*.

Table 2: European Parliament election results in Portugal, 1987-2004

No other parties have polled more than 2% of the vote, and therefore do not need to be taken into account in the following sections. Given this context provided, we can now turn to the analysis of the selection of candidates undertaken by the following political parties, from left to right: the Left Block (BE), the Communists (PCP), the Greens (PEV), the Socialists (PS), the centre-right (PSD) and the conservatives (CDS-PP).

Selecting candidates for the EP Elections

In this section we analyze the recruitment patterns to the European Parliament employed by the six parties which have been identified previously as relevant. A recent study on the topic, covering Austria, Denmark, Germany, France, Spain and the UK found that the main criteria which explained the way in which parties behave at the EP level was their organizational behaviour at the national level (Aylott et.al., 2007). It is a known fact that in Portugal, parties are centralized, and the top leadership bodies have an important role in defining the candidate names and their order on the lists at the legislative level (Freire, 2001). Given this nature we expect to find a similar pattern at the EU level.

In order to do determine the way in which parties select MEP candidates, first the party official documents will be presented. Then the results of interviews conducted with MEPs will be discussed.

The Statutes

For this section all the relevant party's statutes were collected and analyzed. In three cases, the conservative CDS-PP, the Communists (PCP) and the Greens (PEV) there was no information concerning the elaboration of MEP lists. The remainder of the parties has included some indication of how they elaborate the list of MEP candidates. Thus, for the Socialist party, according to article 91 of the most recent statutes, the National Political Committee must designate those who will be part of the EP list.⁴⁸³ The National Political Committee (NPC) is a national body consisting of circa 80 members which convenes every three weeks and is one of the top three deliberative bodies of the party. Although the statute gives the NPC power to designate, it does not specify how the list is made.

In the centre-right party, the PSD, it is the National Political Committee which has the power to propose the European Parliament list (art.21) to the National Council. The National Council must then approve the list (art.19)⁴⁸⁴. Both are top party bodies. The National Political Committee meets bimonthly and defines the party's behaviour in terms of its programme, its electoral lists in all the elections it participates and oversees the party's accounts and budget. The National Council holds meetings every two months and its main competences, besides approving the electoral lists of the party, are to approve the electoral programme and convene the Party Congress whenever necessary.

Finally, in the relatively new party, the extreme-Left BE statutes' state that its main body between Congresses, the National Desk (*Mesa Nacional*) must ratify the candidate list to the EP (art. 10)⁴⁸⁵. Who is in charge of composing the list is not specified in the Statutes. This is a much more recent party, and has striven to differentiate itself on the bodies which compose it. The National Desk leads the BE. Its competencies include the election of a Political Committee which is the main decision-making body on a daily basis. Other powers include the approval of electoral lists as well as defining membership dues. The table below summarizes the findings having gone through the party statutes:

Table 3: Portuguese parties' elaboration of MEP Lists

Party	BE	PEV	PCP	PS	PSD	CDS-PP
Who Proposes?	Unclear	No information provided	No information provided	Unclear	National Political Committee (art.21)	No information provided
Who Approves?	National Desk (<i>Mesa</i>)			National Political Committee	National Council (art.19)	

⁴⁸³ PS, *Estatutos*, approved January 2003 by the National Committee.

⁴⁸⁴ PSD, *Estatutos*, approved March 2006, at the XXVIII Party Congress.

⁴⁸⁵ Bloco de Esquerda, *Estatutos*, approved in June 2007, at the V National Convention.

Whenever the statutes mention how the lists are composed the process occurs always at the national level. No regional or local bodies intervene in the process at least officially. Thus, the statutes reveal a process which is centralized and national. As concerns the parties' whose statutes are silent on the issue of how EP lists are elaborated (both in terms of composition and approval of the lists) this suggests that the process is highly informal but also has a large degree of centralization. This is due to the fact that when competencies are shared by different bodies they are normally legislated and included in the statutes. We tried to confirm this hypothesis in the interviews which were carried out with current and past MEPs in each party and which will be reported in the next section.

MEPs' accounts of the selection procedure

For this section we draw on two samples of MEPs. The first was collected in 2004 when researching the degree to which Portuguese parties were europeanised.⁴⁸⁶ Within the framework of this project a group of MEPs, as well as senior party members who were involved with European affairs (e.g. ex-Commissioners, members of the European Affairs Committee at the national level) were interviewed. At the time we were able to collect the following complete questionnaires: 5 from the PS and the PSD respectively; 3 from the Communist party, 2 from CDS/PP members and 1 each from the BE and the PEV. In order to prepare this brief we selected those questions answered in the questionnaire which were pertinent to understand the way in which EP lists are composed. However, due to the fact that the interviews were carried out some time ago we complemented them with a few current interviews. Thus, in January 2009 a small group of MEPs, were asked to validate the previous findings, as well as two senior figures in the CDS/PP⁴⁸⁷. We will therefore present first the findings from the initial study, as tables. Then we will comment the tables and add the input which was provided by the MEPs more recently.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁶ Project lead by Thomas Poguntke and Elisabeth Carter, University of Keele, on the Europeanisation of Parties.

⁴⁸⁷ Assunção Cristas and João Almeida both part of the CDS-PP's national leadership provided information.

⁴⁸⁸ This time, only one MEP for the PS, PSD, CDS-PP and PCP were contacted. Since the PCP is in coalition with the PEV we consider that MP to cover both parties. These were the following: Edite Estrela (PS), José Ribeiro e Castro (CDS-PP), Duarte Freitas (PSD), Pedro Guerreiro (PCP).

Parties	BE (1)	PEV (1)	PCP (3)	PEV (1)	PS (4)	PSD (5)	CDS (2)
Parties National Leadership Body	4	4	4		4	4	4
Parliamentary Party as a whole	Na	0	0		1	2	1
Parliamentary Party Leader	Na	0	1		1	2	3
National Congress/ National Assembly of Party delegates	Na	2	1		2	1	0
Regional Congress/ Regional Assembly of Party Delegates	Na	2	1		1	1	0
Local Party Sections	Na	3	2		1	1	0

Source: Interviews.

Table 4: For each of these political actors can you please tell me whether they have any influence in the choice of EP Candidates? (multiple answers possible) [Minimum: 0- no importance Maximum: 4- a lot of importance]

Table 4 above presents the average views of party interviewees concerning the relative importance of various party bodies. All are unanimous in attributing most importance to the parties' national leadership in influencing the choice of EP candidates. Almost all other bodies are considered relatively unimportant. The Parliamentary party leader is most often selected as relevant. In the CDS-PP that is due to the fact that the party leader was also parliamentary party leader. In the PS, it was the person holding the post, and not the post per se that made a difference.

According to the recent interviews carried out, the following aspects were highlighted: in the PS, the CDS/PP and the PSD, the party leader is a key figure in the selection of MEP candidates. In the CDS/PP due to the fact that the Statutes are silent on the matter, the leader's leeway is even larger. However, our sources stated that the list is approved in the National Council, a top leadership body. Leaders then, make choices under certain constraints. The first is the Statutes, which in some cases force leaders to ratify their proposals by top leadership bodies. The second constraint is the party's local bases. Even though the list which is composed is national, it is considered important, especially in the larger parties (PS and PSD) to have candidates who have ties to the party's political strongholds in the main geographical areas of the country (North, Centre, South, Lisbon, Azores, Madeira). Also, all current interviewees mentioned that a new constraint had been created with the passing of the Parity Law by the current government in 2006. This law constrains the party leaders to have a better gender balance on the electable portion of the list. This constraint will first come into force in 2009.

The relation between national and European parties

In this last part we aim at understanding the extent to which the European parliamentary parties in the EP have an impact on the functioning on the Portuguese national parties. Portuguese parties have had diverse types of relationships with the European parliamentary parties. In the case of the Socialist Party, the PS, it has since it first elected MEPs belonged to the PES (Party of European Socialists). The Communists (PCP) which run allied with the Greens are members of the GUE/NGL (European United Left/ Northern Greens). The extreme-Left MEP from the BE elected since 2004 has also joined the GUE/NGL group, but on looser terms.

On the Right there has been more volatility concerning the institutional affiliations of parties. The PSD in 1987 joined the Liberal group of the EP, the ELDR (European Liberal Democrat Group). In 1996, the PSD left this Liberal Alliance to join the European People's Party (EPP). The small, Conservative, CDS-PP initially started as a member of the EPP. However, following the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, the party decided to leave this Group and changed its speech to a rather more eurosceptic tone. Once the party allied with the PSD in the 2004 elections however (see Table 2 above) it joined the EPP-ED (European People's Party-European Democrats). Thus, both right-wing parties belong to the largest right-wing party in the EP. In the previous survey there was not a concrete question asking whether the European transnational federations had any input in the composition of the candidate lists to the EP elections.

In the interviews conducted recently, all respondents were unanimous in agreeing that there is no intervention at all by European parties in the composition or approval of the EP lists. On the contrary, these parties do seem to have an impact albeit a limited one, in the way in which national parties draw up their electoral manifesto. This is especially true for the small extreme-left parties, the Greens (PEV) and the Left Block (BE).

Parties	BE (1)	PEV (1)	PCP (3)	PS (2)	PSD (5)	CDS (2)
National MPs	4	4	2	1	1	1
MEPs	4	NA	4	3	3	2
Leader of EP Delegation	NA	NA	4	4	3	4
Party Leader	NA	NA	4	4	4	4
Party Representative in the Executive Bodies of Transnational Federations, (e.g.PES; EPP-ED; ELDR; EGP)	4	4	2	3	2	2
Parliamentary Party Leaders (when not the Party leader)	4	-	3	2	2	1

Source: Interviews.

Table 5: Which of the following political actors participate in the determination of the contents of the party's European Parliament Manifesto?

Conclusions

This brief on Portuguese political parties sought to establish the way in which the Portuguese political parties compose their lists to the European Parliament. In an introductory section we established that in Portugal, there are six relevant parties for this matter, two of which normally run in a coalition (the Communists and the Greens). Each of them has to produce only one national list which includes fifteen candidates and between three and eight replacement candidates. The electoral system employed is d'Hondt PR, to elect 24 MEPs. The electoral threshold to elect one MEP is substantially higher than to elect an MP in the largest district in the country.

Three of the parties' statutes did not include any provision for proposal or approval of the MEP lists. In the Left-Block, the Socialist Party and the centre-right PSD the Statutes define that national leadership bodies designate the candidates. Thus, as expected, given the relatively centralized nature of parties in Portugal at the national level, the EP list is elaborated at a top national level.

The numerous interviews collected served to complicate this picture somewhat. In particular, it seems that the role of the party leader is pivotal in the elaboration of the list, in all parties. But the leaders' preferences suffer certain constraints, especially in the PS and the PSD, the two largest parties. The main constraint is geographical: leaders must be sensitive to compose a list which has elements from diverse parts of the country and who represent the party's strongholds. In the 2009 elections a new constraint will be the obligation to have at least 33% of either gender in the elected MEPs in each party. There will be financial sanctions to those parties who do not fulfill this gender quota.

Finally, neither the statutes nor the interviews revealed any role for the European transnational federations in the composition of the MEP lists. However, it does seem that these federations have some input in the EP electoral manifestos produced by each party, especially for the Communists and the Greens, both part of GUE/NGL.

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Annex 1: Legislative Elections in Portugal 1976-2005, % votes and seats

Party/Year		1976	1979	1980	1983	1985	1987	1991	1995	1999	2002	2005
UDP(PSR)	% vote	1.7%	2.1%	1.3%	1.1%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%	0.57%			
	Seats	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0			
BE	% vote									2.4	2.7	6,4
	Seats									2	3	8
PCP/APU/ CDU	% vote	14.6%	19.0%	16.9%	18.2%	15.5%	12.2%	8.8%	8.61%	8.9	6.9	7,5
	Seats	40	47	41	44	38	31	17	15	17	12	14
PS (+ allies)	% vote	<u>35.0%</u>	28.1%	28.0%	<u>36.3%</u>	20.8%	22.3%	29.25%	<u>43.85%</u>	<u>44.1</u>	37.8	<u>45.0</u>
	Seats	<u>107</u>	74	71	<u>101</u>	57	60	72	<u>112</u>	<u>115</u>	76	<u>121</u>
PRD	% vote					17.9%	4.9%	0.6%				
	Seats					45	7	0				
PSD	% vote	24.4%			<u>27.0%</u>	<u>29.8%</u>	<u>50.1%</u>	<u>50.4%</u>	34.0%	32.3	<u>40.2</u>	28,8
	Seats	73			<u>75</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>148</u>	<u>135</u>	88	81	<u>105</u>	75
CDS	% vote	16.6%			12.4%	9.8%	4.3%	4.4%	9.08%	8.3	<u>8.7</u>	7,3
	Seats	42			30	22	4	5	15	15	<u>14</u>	12
AD coalition	% vote		<u>42.2%</u>	<u>47.1%</u>								
	Seats		<u>121</u>	<u>126</u>								
PSN	% vote							1.7%	0.21%			
	Seats							1	0			

Source: STAPE

Underlined indicates the party(parties) which formed government following the elections.

ROMANIA

Introduction

Scope of Work

The present briefing paper is focusing on the current methods/criteria used by Romanian political parties for selecting candidates for the upcoming European elections. The research has primarily considered Romanian political parties that previously reached the electoral threshold of 5% during the previous elections of May 2007 and are currently represented in the European Parliament. Where considered relevant, brief references to parties that have not reached the electoral threshold, but have announced their intentions to run again for the elections for the European Parliament scheduled for June 2009, will also be included.

Methods of Research

The research predominantly relies on *qualitative* methods of research including:

- analysis of the relevant national legislation regulating European elections proceedings;
- primary analysis of Romanian political parties bylaws and formal procedures (if any) for establishing party lists/selecting candidates for the European elections;
- interviews with party leaders of the main political parties running for the European elections, considering the above-mentioned criteria;
- press monitoring conducted on a sample of 9 national newspapers and the official news bulletin (*Agerpres*) covering relevant information on the European elections released since January 2009.

Quantitative assessment: the analysis is also considering voter turnout for the European elections of 2007, as compared to national ones (local and national) in the past years. Indirectly, the low turnout rate may be a cause of the relatively low interest of Romanian parties in shaping a coherent recruitment strategy for the candidates in the European elections.

Preliminary results achieved by using each method described above were further aggregated in order to generate representative conclusions for each party referred to within the study.

National context

Overview of the main Romanian political parties represented in the European Parliament. Incumbent vs. new parties running for the European elections of June, 2009

Romania organized its first European elections in November 25, 2007 (during the transition period between January 15, 2007 and November 25, 2007, the former Romanian euro-

observers undertook MEPs' mandates for Romania). Results of the November scrutiny pointed to 5 Romanian parties and an independent candidate that reached the alternative thresholds of:

- 5% for political parties, minorities' organizations, political and electoral alliances;
- a number of votes equaling or exceeding the national electoral coefficient, calculated as the unit of the ratio between the total number of valid votes and the corresponding number of MEP mandates for Romania, for independent candidates.

The 5 parties and their corresponding electoral scores were: the Democrat Party (PD) with 28.81% and 13 mandates, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) with 23.11% and 10 mandates, the National Liberal Party (PNL) with 13.44% and 6 mandates, the Liberal Democrat Party (PLD) - 7.78% and 3 mandates and the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) - 5.52% and 2 mandates. The 35th mandate was assigned to the independent candidate Laszlo Tokes with 176,533 votes (3.44%).

Political affiliation of the 35 Romanian MEPs indicates the following representation:

- Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats (EPP - ED): 18 Romanian MEPs
- Socialist Group in the European Parliament (PSE): 10 Romanian MEPs
- Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE): 6 Romanian MEPs
- Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance: 1 Romanian MEP.

Some of the Romanian MEPs have run and been elected in local and parliamentary elections held in Romania in June 2008 and November 2008 or appointed as Government officials, their mandates being taken over by parties' candidates initially being on standby lists. This is the case for 10 MEPs who have given up their mandates in favor of domestic offices (either in local public administration or in the Romanian Parliament/Government) and have been replaced since November 2007.

As far as the political parties represented in the European Parliament after the elections of May 2007 are concerned, there are also some domestic political aspects that need to be taken into consideration when analyzing the incumbent *versus* new parties announcing their candidacies for the European elections of June 7, 2009. The most important systemic/strategic changes in parties' approaches towards the next European scrutiny are briefly described below.

Immediately after the European elections of November 2007, the Democrat Party (PD) and the Liberal Democrat Party (PLD) merged into the Democrat Liberal Party (PDL), thus currently running on a single party list.

The national parliamentary elections of November 2008 brought two other major parties running on common lists - the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Conservative Party (PC), the latter registering a modest score in the past European elections (only 2.93%). Leaders of the Conservative Party announced that they were considering running on

common party lists with PSD for the European elections of June 2009 as well⁴⁸⁹. Furthermore, the current member of the Group of Greens – Laszlo Tokes, formerly running as an independent candidate, is being announced as forerunner of the common party list of the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania and the National Council of Hungarians in Transylvania⁴⁹⁰.

Considering the above mentioned national context, the current main parties running for the European elections of June to be further analyzed in the present research paper are:

- (1) the Democrat Liberal Party (PDL)
- (2) the Social Democratic Party (PSD)
- (3) the National Liberal Party (PNL)
- (4) the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR)
- (5) the Conservative Party (PC).

National legislation regulating European elections

Formal criteria applicable to all political parties/independent candidates

The main piece of legislation regulating European elections in Romania is the Law no. 33/2007 on the organization and process of elections for the European Parliament, amended by Government Ordinances no. 1/2007, 8/2007 and 84/2007. The election system for the European Parliamentary elections in Romania is *proportional representation* based on party lists or independent candidacy in a single national constituency, for a 5-year mandate.

Incompatibilities between the MEP mandate and national offices

According to article 7(1) of Law no. 33/2007, the mandate of an MEP is incompatible with the position of deputy or senator in the Romanian Parliament, with any Government office, offices within the Presidential administration, offices which are legally exempt from candidacy – Constitutional Court magistrates, ombudsmen, magistrates, army personnel, policemen and other categories of civil servants or with any executive positions within the private/business sector (as stipulated by article 81, Title IV, Chapter III, 2nd Section of Law no. 161/2003 – the “anti-corruption law”). Such incompatibilities are not only formal criteria, but are rather used *in extenso* by some Romanian political parties as “prevention” criteria, in the sense that they restrict candidacies in the European elections from party members holding elected positions in local or central public administration, as further detailed. The main argument is that of preventing destabilization of local/national political environment recently build up after the consequent local and national elections of 2008. Still, one may easily conclude that such an approach was not necessarily pursued symmetrically – as almost one third of the Romanian MEPs have quit offices before term, yet this seemed not to “trouble” any Romanian political party at the time.

⁴⁸⁹ The decision was publicly announced on Sunday, March 15, 2009.

⁴⁹⁰ CNMT is self-identifying as an organization (*and not a political party*) whose main goal is to advance in leading local positions as many persons fighting for Hungarians' territorial autonomy in Romania as possible.

Minimum formal conditions required by the law for registering candidacies for European elections

Romanian citizens entitled to vote and aged 23 on the voting day⁴⁹¹ have the right to be elected in the European Parliament. EU citizens domiciling or residing in Romania have the right to be elected as representatives of Romania in the European Parliament, under the reserve of fulfilling the cumulative conditions of the Romanian law.

Article 10 of Law no. 33/2007 stipulates the corroborated minimum conditions that an EU citizen running on party, minority organization, political or electoral alliance lists or as an independent candidate has to fulfill in order to register his/her candidacy with the Central Electoral Bureau. Apart from a valid ID, the EU citizen should declare at own responsibility:

- citizenship and domicile address in Romania;
- municipality or electoral constituency where the candidate is registered in the state of origin;
- the explicit declaration that he/she is not running for the position of MEP in another Member State;

Also, the EU citizen running for the European elections in Romania should accompany his/her candidacy request by an official translated document certifying that the respective person was not denied the right to be elected in the state of origin by a definitive Court decision.

All documents/information are verified by the Central Electoral Bureau, which sends the candidacy application further to the Permanent Electoral Authority⁴⁹². Within 24 hours, the latter has the obligation to inform the homologue authorities in the state of origin about the eligible community citizen's intention to run for an MEP mandate in Romania.

Article 12 of the Law states the specific technical conditions for registering candidacies at the Romanian Central Electoral Bureau, as follows:

- (1) proposals are registered no later than 60 days before the reference day;
- (2) lists of candidates should be designed as to ensure a gender balanced representation;
- (3) the number of candidates on each list can exceed the total number of mandates assigned to Romania by a maximum of 10 positions (that is each party/minorities' organization/political or electoral alliance may advance complete lists with no more than 45 candidates);
- (4) each candidates' lists should be accompanied by lists containing at least 200,000 valid signatures of Romanian electors supporting the respective party/minorities' organization/political or electoral alliance;
- (5) each party/minorities' organization/political or electoral alliance can register *a single* list with candidates at national level;
- (6) an independent candidate can register his/her candidacy if he/she is supported by at least 100,000 citizens;

⁴⁹¹ The day of the European elections established by Government Decision.

⁴⁹² The authority responsible with elections' management in Romania.

- (7) independent candidates cannot run on party/minorities' organization/political or electoral alliances' lists;
- (8) candidacies registered on more than one electoral list are nullified by the Central Electoral Bureau.

All the above-mentioned criteria are mandatory for each party/minority organization/political or electoral alliance and independent candidate running for the European Parliament as a representative of Romania and failure to meet these criteria automatically leads to disqualification of the respective candidatures. The formal obligation of fulfilling the minimum legal conditions falls under the responsibility of the party et. al./independent candidate, yet some of the parties have assigned individual active roles to candidates seeking eligible positions on lists in accomplishing these conditions, as detailed in the sections below.

Institutionalized versus conjectural selection criteria for MEP candidates

Analysis of parties' bylaws and procedures

Within this section, the author has reviewed bylaws and formal written procedures available as public documents at the time of the research of the 5 main parties announcing their intention to propose complete candidate lists for the European Parliamentary elections of June 7, 2009 (listed in section 4).

The Democrat Liberal Party (PDL)

As the “newest” party registered in Romania after the first European elections of November 2007 (formed after the merger of the Democrat Party and of the Liberal Democrat Party, both winning seats in the European Parliament), PDL is amongst the few parties in Romania to include minimum formal reference in statutory documents to procedures of selecting/approving candidatures for the European Parliament.

Article 148(8) of section 16B *Candidature for the Parliament* of the PDL’s bylaws states that “Candidatures for European Parliament are approved by the National Permanent Bureau”. This is the single explicit reference to candidates running for European offices; for comparison, conditions for running for national parliamentary elections are much more detailed and include all party hierarchical levels:

- (1) Only active party members with at least 3 years of membership, out of which 2 years of *active membership* recognized as such by the Secretariat for Human Resources, Militants and Career Management, may run for parliamentary elections;
- (2) Active party members who fulfill the conditions set up above and wish to candidate shall notify their intention to the Permanent District Bureau at least one year before the start of the electoral campaign;
- (3) In the same interval, the National Permanent Bureau may notify District Bureaus of its proposal for candidates, amongst the members of the National Bureau, with the approval of the National Directory College.

- (4) 6 months before the official start of the electoral campaign, the District Bureaus and the National Permanent Bureau shall submit for approval to the District Coordination Councils/Bucharest Coordinator Council lists with candidature proposals;
- (5) Final proposals are approved by the National Coordinating Council.

If we were to corroborate preliminary conclusions related to the lack of rigid political criteria, such as minimum duration of active membership, with information promoted by the media, according to which PDL have invited notorious civil society leaders to run on eligible position⁴⁹³, we may state at this point that, for the European Parliament elections, “image capital” is more important for the Democrat Liberal Party when proposing party candidates to the detriment of political activist experience.

The Social Democratic Party (PSD)

According to the party’s bylaws, “PSD stimulates internal competition for the promotion in the party hierarchy, in administrative or elected positions, of those members who have demonstrated an acknowledgeable professional qualification, an incontestable moral probity and who fulfill selection criteria comprised in the Statute. To this purpose, preliminary elections for designating candidates for deputies’, senators’, MEPs’, county or local councilors’ and mayors’ positions shall be organized”.

Although the 3rd article of PSD’s bylaws explicitly refers to *selection criteria*, no other mention to either general or specific such selection criteria appears in the rest of the document. Except for technical references regarding parties’ executive structures and their relation/responsibilities with regards to candidates in the European elections or Socialist MEPs, no other information is provided on how party members may submit their candidacy for European Parliamentary elections.

The District/Municipal Organization Councils are entitled to organize preliminary elections for “identifying own candidates in parliamentary elections, respectively for senators, deputies and members of the European Parliament [...] – according to the decision and procedures adopted by the central bodies” (article 40). Again, the information beyond preliminary elections criteria is missing, leaving to a certain extent some inconsistency between the general principle of competition announced in the beginning of the document and the actual application of this principle to concrete examples/selection criteria.

⁴⁹³ The Iasi District Branch of PDL has proposed Alina - Mungiu Pippidi, the President of the Romanian Academic Society, a major NGO in Romania, as forerunner candidate for PDL. The candidature has been conditioned by Alina Mungiu with a rather controversial argument: she declared that she would not accept to candidate unless PDL proves moral probity by receding two other names from the list of candidates: that of Elena Băsescu, the daughter of the Romanian President Traian Băsescu and Rareş Niculescu, former MEP, currently the Government’s Spokesperson and family related to the Romanian Prime-Minister. Recently, Alina Mungiu has declined the proposal and Elena Băsescu, the daughter of the Romanian President, has quit PD-L for running as an independent for the European Parliament. Similar proposals for candidature have been advanced by PDL to Monica Macovei, former Ministry of Justice and Traian Ungureanu, a reputed journalist at *Cotidianul* newspaper.

Corroborated with other sources of documentation used during the present research (interviews with party leaders and press monitoring), we may conclude that PSD seems to confine selection of candidates in the European elections to strict internal political negotiations, as no distinct criteria may be associated with the selection process.

The National Liberal Party (PNL)

According to PNL's bylaws, the main criterion according to which candidatures are promoted and analyzed for each type of scrutiny is represented by the *last electoral results of the respective territorial branch supporting the lists of candidates* by comparing it to the national average electoral score of the party.

Based on this criterion, responsibilities for selecting/approving candidates in the European Parliamentary elections are divided within the National Liberal Party on two decisional levels:

- *The local level*, where the Territorial Permanent Delegation has the ability to approve and submit for validation to the Permanent Delegation the candidates in the parliamentary elections. This is only the case of those territorial branches that have secured in the last scrutiny an electoral score higher than the national average score of the party (article 49, j). For those territorial branches that had electoral scores below the national average score, the lists with candidates are approved and further proposed to the Central Political Bureau.
- *The central level*, composed by two main party structures: the Permanent Delegation (where actual MEPs are full members) and the Central Political Bureau. The Permanent Delegation validates the proposals of the Central Political Bureau regarding lists with candidates in the European elections (article 68 (1), j).
- A third consultative body – the Ethics Commission – may be required by the Central Political Bureau to analyze and approve/reject candidatures in the European Parliamentary elections. (article 81 (1)).

Applying the formal criteria set up by PNL for selecting candidates in the European elections, we may state that certain territorial branches will have a more powerful say in the current selection, namely those organizations that have managed to score higher than the national average electoral score of PNL in the last national parliamentary elections of 2008 (18.75%). It is interesting to mention that the condition related to the capacity of proposing candidates is not linked with the type of scrutiny, but it takes into consideration the most recent election process, which could be interpreted as an interest of the party leadership to maintain a certain dynamics of party activists, as well as an internal motivation system in proposing eligible candidates.

The Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR/RMDSZ)

Due to the specificity of UDMR, which is a minority organization representing the interests of the Hungarians in Romania and to UDMR's relations with other representative bodies of

the same minorities, selection criteria – at least in the current context – fell on the second place, being outclassed by intense political negotiations between several minorities' leaders. At present, UDMR has initiated the process of amending the Statute of the Union, which is no longer in line with the current political conditions in Romania, according to party leaders' declarations⁴⁹⁴. Hunor Kelemen, the Executive President of UDMR and national coordinator of the electoral campaign for European elections has recently declared: "This years' elections for the European Parliament create a new situation for UDMR, as this is the first time we are preparing for a common campaign with an organization which is not part of the Union (*author note* – CNMT – see footnote on page 5) nor associated to the Union". He also added that UDMR is facing a period when serious efforts are required for gathering the 200,000 signatures and for establishing logistic and organizational measures in that respect. Hunor has pointed to the fact that UDMR has adopted an internal document including criteria for selecting candidates, which has been distributed to local organizations. Candidatures should be forwarded to the Unions' Electoral Commission by March 14; after the review of the Commission, UDMR and CNMT must finalize the common candidates' list until March 23rd, the list being subject to revision and approval of the Union Representatives Council, which will adopt the "common list of Hungarian solidarity", which will be public by April 3, 2009, according to UDMR's representative declarations.

While not explicitly referring to it as a specific selection criterion, the strong argument in selecting future candidates representing the Union and the National Council of Hungarians from Transylvania is the capacity to embody and communicate the sensitive message of self determination of the Hungarian minority, a hot topic which has marked the recent political relations between the representatives of the Union and the Romanian President, as well as other Government officials. The alliance of UDMR and CNMT, whose leader is Laszlo Tokes, the current MEP running as independent in 2007, is meant to strengthen the solidarity of the Hungarian minority, and the European elections will be a strong test in that respect.

The Conservative Party (PC)

Although it has not previously met the electoral threshold of 5%, the Conservative Party is one of the Romanian political parties that could be characterized so far as having what Giovanni Sartori calls "blackmail potential": PC has made the difference in 2004, re-positioning the ruling coalition at the time.

In 2008, due to the weak electoral potential revealed by campaign electoral polls, PC has decided to run on common party lists with PSD – a strategy that has brought the 2% party 5 mandates in the Romanian Parliament (4 mandates of deputy and 1 of senator). A similar strategy will be adopted by PC in the upcoming European elections, as the Conservatives announced on March 15 that they are going to run on common lists with the Social Democratic Party (PSD PC Alliance).

⁴⁹⁴ The Romanian version of UDMR's bylaws is no longer available on the official website of the Union. After the parliamentary elections of November 2008, this is the first time after 1990 when UDMR is not part of the Governmental coalition, a political reality which has generated a different, more radical approach of the party leaders' discourses.

The formal statutory documents of the Conservative Party do not include any explicit reference to selection criteria used internally for selecting candidates in the European Parliament elections. *In extenso*, we may assume that similar procedures applicable to the selection/approval of candidates in the national parliamentary elections could be used for candidates running for European elections as well. In that respect, there are several internal decisional levels involved as following: The Local Party Council may propose candidates for local and parliamentary elections (article 51), which are centralized at each district level by the District/County Council (article 54) and are approved by the District Branch Conference (article 47). Lists with candidates are validated by the Executive District Bureau (article 63) and the final list is subject to approval of the Political Bureau (article 82) and of the President of the Party (article 76).

Nonetheless, in the context of the recent decision of PC to run on common party lists with PSD, political negotiations with the Social Democratic Party will definitely weigh significantly to the detriment of objective, individual selection criteria. Media speculates that amongst 10 possible eligible candidates, the Conservative Party will be assigned a single position on the common list.

Party leaders' perspectives on the selection of candidates in the European elections

The analysis of formal statutory documents of Romanian parties proposing candidates in the upcoming European Parliamentary elections has been complemented by qualitative research among representative party leaders, who have been interviewed for learning additional information on the functional selection criteria for candidates. A pool of 20 experts from the main political parties included in the research, as well as representatives of other parties and independent experts were interviewed using the Delphi method (*specialized interview*) during January – February 2009. The pool of experts⁴⁹⁵ included:

- 7 representatives of PDL (members of the Permanent Political Bureau responsible with approving the candidatures for European elections, members of the Specialized Committee responsible with selecting candidates' applications, the Vice-president of the Permanent Electoral Authority, a former MEP);
- 5 representatives of PNL (the national campaign coordinator, members of the Permanent Delegation and of the Central Political Bureau with consultative votes, the delegated Vice-president for development regions);
- 3 representatives of PSD (the vice-president of the Permanent National Bureau, a president of District Branch Organization and a newly elected MP, former councilor of the President of PSD)
- 2 representatives of UDMR (an executive vice-president and a former candidate in the European elections of 2007)
- 1 representative of PC (vice-president of the party)
- 1 representative of the Roma Party *Pro Europe* (the President of the Party)
- 1 Constitutional law professor.

⁴⁹⁵ The complete nominal list of interviewed experts may be provided on express request.

The most relevant opinions/information on the core topic of the present research were grouped for each of the 5 parties included in the study and are detailed below.

The Democrat Liberal Party

According to the representatives of PDL, the main criteria to be taken into consideration during the current selection of candidates in the European Parliamentary elections take heed both of the *party* level, as well as of *individual capacities*, as follows:

- Each of the 8 geographic regions of Romania must be represented on the party list with candidatures (geographic representativeness criterion);
- A certain percentage (30%) amongst the first 15 eligible candidates must be women and young candidates aged 35 at most;
- Priority shall be given to proposals for candidatures coming from District organizations with high performances in past elections;
- The candidate must fluently speak at least one foreign language of European circulation (candidates knowledge will be separately assessed as part of the selection process);
- The candidate should sign a declaration on his/her own responsibility that he/she has not exercised any form of political police (the former *Securitate*);
- The candidate must have solid knowledge in at least one field of reference of the Community *acquis* and he/she must be supported by at least one District Branch Organization.

The Social Democratic Party

The initial conclusion drawn after the analysis of PSD's bylaws pointing to the lack of specific criteria for selecting candidates in the European elections has been confirmed by the party representatives interviewed during the field research. According to one representative's declaration "PSD doesn't have specific criteria (*a.n.* for selecting candidates), yet diplomacy and solid knowledge of European affairs do make the difference between potential candidates".

Through a media statement, Mircea Geoană, the President of PSD, promised that half of the candidates placed on eligible positions will be women. Recently⁴⁹⁶, the President of PSD has declared that all candidatures from the Social Democratic Party will be reviewed by a selection committee including representatives of the European Socialist Party, the main selection criteria announced being that of the capacity of future MEPs to represent at highest level not only the interests of the Socialists, but the general public interest of Romania, within the EP Committees.

⁴⁹⁶ Declaration published by *Agerpres* on March, 20, 2009.

The National Liberal Party

PNL has elaborated the most consistent selection criteria, which have been provided to the author as an official internal document distributed to all territorial branches of the party. According to this document, the *Commission for setting up selection criteria and evaluation of PNL candidates for European Parliament in 2009*, made up of 5 members (3 vice-presidents of the party, a member of the Political Central Bureau and the Deputy Secretary General of PNL) has established two categories of criteria:

Eliminatory criteria

Criteria proposed by the Coalition for a Clear Parliament⁴⁹⁷:

- The candidate should not have inadequate benefits as a result of conflict of interests, nor be investigated by the National Anti-Corruption Department;
- The candidate should not have been a member of more than three political parties at the time of the selection, in case the parties to which he/she was a member were not dissolute, merged with the current party or radically changed political orientation;
- The candidate should not have collaborated with the old regime of Securitate (political police);
- The candidate should not possess any assets pointing to a visible disproportion with the revenue sources;
- The candidate should not fall under the provisions of the Senates' legislative initiative on lustration⁴⁹⁸.
- University degree;
- Solid knowledge of a foreign language (English, French, Spanish, German etc.)
- At least 3 years' membership within PNL;
- The candidate should not have explicitly manifested a hostile attitude towards the party or liberal values;
- The candidate should have solid knowledge on the functioning of the European institutions.

Political activity and performance criteria

- Presenting a coherent political project with relevance for EU affairs;
- Interview with the Commission for evaluating candidates for the European Parliament;
- Professional experience as a member of the national Parliament or as official in local or central public administration;
- Attendance rate in the national parliamentary works;
- Tenure of executive position within the party;
- Implication in public actions/debates on the topic of European Parliament elections;
- Post-University degree;

⁴⁹⁷ A civil society platform of 8 Romanian NGOs militating for a more transparent and fair process of selecting candidates for national/European Parliament.

⁴⁹⁸ The bills states that persons who are proved to have been part of the *nomenklatura* of the communist regime shall be banned from candidate to any public offices or dignities for 10 years.

- Knowledge of other official EU languages.

The Commission will advance its proposals to the Political Central Bureau, which is responsible for the final decision, balancing the results with the principle of territorial representativeness and with the need for ensuring a participation as wide as possible within the steering committees of the European Parliament. The members of the Evaluation Commission are not entitled to candidate.

Apart from the above mentioned criteria, one of the interviewed PNL representatives has declared that the Commission will also consider the direct involvement of the candidate in assembling the list with the necessary 200,000 signatures, as well as the capacity to fundraise for his/her electoral campaign.

The Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania

The two interviewed leaders of UDMR have pointed out two major aspects concerning the Union's approach on European elections of June 2009: the first is that, according to the vice-president, no formal criteria is in place for selecting candidates, yet professional and political experience of the candidate will be important in the selection process. The second aspect is rather a discontent manifested by the second interviewed representative, who believes that "nowhere in Europe parliamentary elections are focusing on European issues, thus misleading the electorate". At the same time, the UDMR representative (former candidate for MEP position in 2007) thinks that the "European discourse" should be a must in the selection process.

Still, the Executive President of the Union has officially provided the author with a brief overview of the formal selection criteria which seem not to be known/internalized by all executive members of the Union. This states that "according to the responsibilities assigned through the bylaws, in January, the Permanent Union Council has decided on a set of criteria for approving candidatures for the European Parliament:

The candidate, a member of the Union or of an affiliated organization, should prove he/she is being supported by one or more local organizations, should submit a letter of intent regarding his/her candidacy, an European CV, a B.A degree, the candidates' political program in Hungarian and English, a certificate acknowledging the candidate's knowledge of foreign language(s), a brief overview of his/her political activity before and after 1989 as a member of the Union but not exclusively, a declaration regarding the candidate's collaboration with former *Securitate* or other intelligence, respectively a formal commitment that if he or she is elected, he/she will assume the obligations of UDMR in relation to European partners".

Exclusion criteria point to those persons who collaborated with former *Securitate*, members who are not fluently speaking a foreign language (English, French or German) or who do not comply with the minimum legal criteria for being elected in the European Parliament.

The procedure of registering and approving candidatures within UDMR has been settled in the same Decision stating the selection criteria. The conformity of documents is verified by

Union's Electoral Committee. In certain situations, interested persons may appeal against the decision of having his/her candidature rejected by the Electoral Committee. The candidates who were accepted by the Committee will be further interviewed by the Permanent Union Council, the Council being responsible with establishing the array of candidates on the candidates' list based on: candidates' knowledge of foreign languages, knowledge of EU institutional system, leadership experience, solid professional background. The decision of the Council may be appealed in case less than 43 candidates are submitting their candidatures: in this situation, the Council will complete the list after consulting with territorial branches of the Union.

Although the media have largely covered the common UDMR – CNMT candidature list, the formal criteria provided by Kelemen Hunor, the Executive President of the Union and the campaign coordinator doesn't make any reference to potential common selection criteria.

The Conservative Party

The single selection criterion mentioned by the Conservative vice-president interviewed during the field research is that the candidate should not hold elected or appointed offices in central administration (Parliament or Government). This mention should yet be considered as relative to the more recent context of common candidature with PSD, where selection criteria may be revised and re-negotiated between the two party leaders.

Selection criteria nurtured by the media

Above the formal selection criteria stipulated in party bylaws and other official documents and detailed during individual interviews conducted as part of the documentation process, constant media monitoring of 9 national newspapers, as well as of the official daily news bulletin *Agerpres* has revealed additional details which complete the overview on the actual selection process for candidates running for MEPs positions representing Romania. The most relevant conclusions were grouped as well under party profiles (where applicable):

The Democratic Liberal Party

According to *Cotidianul*, the edition of March 3rd, PDL decided to ban candidatures of mayors currently in office, presidents of County Councils and MPs to run for European elections. The decision is highly disputed by some members of the party, including a former MEP (Dumitru Oprea), elected as a Senator in November 2008, who announced that he is going to appeal the decision of the National Political Bureau.

PD-L announced that the final list of candidates will be made public in March 30, after the Permanent National Bureau have consulted the district branches which are expected to propose a short list of 5 to 7 candidates per development region (in total, there are 8 development regions in Romania).

The Social Democratic Party

The President of PSD has recently declared that he would initiate a large bottom-up consultation at the level of each territorial branch organization for debating the electoral platform, candidature proposals, as well as the bylaws amendment proposals to be announced during the next Conference of the party to be held in April 2009. The final list with candidates will be announced on March 25, 2009 and the party leader has announced that he was expecting PSD to win 15 out of the 33 MEP mandates allocated for Romania.

The National Liberal Party

According to a declaration of the PNL Evaluation Committee's President, Teodor Meleşcanu, 42 members of PNL have tabled their applications for candidature in the European elections up to the deadline of March 1st. The final list was supposed to be announced after the Party Conference held during March 20 – 21st, yet the newly elected President of PNL – Crin Antonescu, postponed the announcement of the final list for the first week of April. Other news point to the increasing pressures coming from territorial organizations with good electoral scores in past elections in placing their candidates on eligible positions (most skeptical party representatives appreciate the first 6 places as being eligible, while more optimistic ones stake for 10 eligible candidates).

The Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania

Despite the extremely reserved communication of UDMR, media sources speak of a proportional division of the common UDMR – CNMT candidates' lists based on the following algorithm: 75% of the candidates belonging to UDMR and 25% to CNMT (according to the results of local elections held in June 2008). The two organizations will have separate campaign staff, but a common coordination committee will supervise the electoral campaign and will balance responsibilities between the two.

Recent news published on March 20 point to the following short list of candidates: Laszlo Tokes (CNMT), Iuliu Winkler (currently MEP), Csaba Sogor (MEP), fourth position – to be decided by CNMT, Peter Kovacs (UDMR Vice-president responsible with branch district organizations), Ana Horvath (UDMR), Istvan Csutak (UDMR), eighth place – to be decided by CNMT, Karoly Szabo (UDMR). The complete list will be published soon, according to the declarations of UDMR President, Marko Bela. UDMR and CNMT are targeting 3 MEP mandates.

The Conservative Party

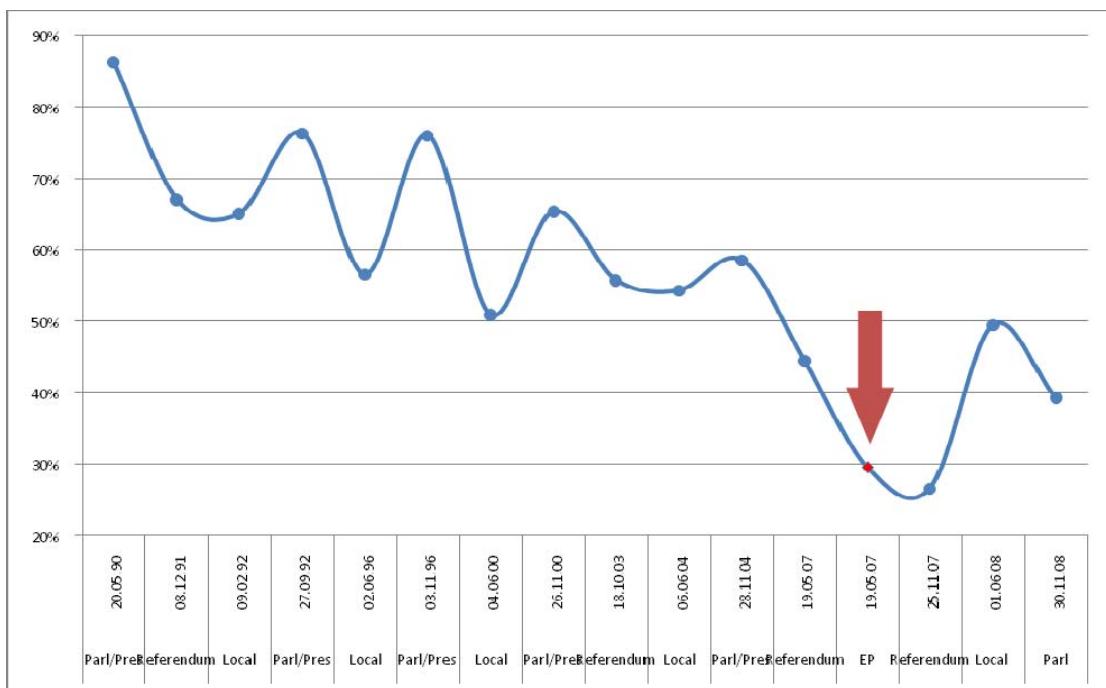
The most recent media news related to the Conservative Party's selection process for candidates in the European elections point to the decision to run on common lists with the Social Democratic Party. An official press release of PC launched on March 15 is also referring to an aspect that might be further included as core electoral platform of the Conservatives for the European elections: "PC will build a political strategy aimed at strengthening the Romanian community in those regions where Romanians are the

minority, as well as it will stimulate a correct reference to the national interest of all Romanian citizens, regardless of nationality".

Voter turnout in Romania and estimated figures for June 2009

Possible cause for relatively weak interest of political parties in "second order" elections

Romania makes no exception from the general European descending trend in voters' turnout. The table below shows the dynamics of voters' turnout in Romania starting with the free elections of 1990 up to the national legislative elections of November 2008.



Source: Institute for Public Policy, 2009

The elections for the EP of May 2007, have registered the second lowest voters' turnout (29.5%) after the referendum for the change of the electoral system (26.5%) in the recent history of Romanian elections. The most optimistic expectations for June 2009 point to a similar turnout (30%), while some party representatives (UDMR) count on no more than 25% turnout.

Although not explicitly verbalized by all the political actors interviewed during the research, this fact also influences the process of selecting candidates: while the most influential/powerful candidates potentially mobilizing candidates are "kept" for national/local elections, EP elections are perceived as "second order" elections by the vast majority of Romanian political parties, therefore the proposed candidates are not necessarily the most prominent party figures, but rather people with an academic background and/or with relevant European experience. Most of the parties do give a net

advantage to the current MEPs when drafting the lists with candidates, as could be concluded from the interviews/press monitoring.

Conclusions

Out of the 5 parties subject to analysis, three have proved an articulated interest for setting up specific selection criteria for candidates for the European Parliament, at least at a formal and/or declarative level: the Democrat Liberal Party, the National Liberal Party and the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania.

PSD is the single Romanian political party that has so far explicitly referred to consultations with European homologues/political groups to which they are affiliated when deciding the lists for candidates further running for the 33 MEP seats allocated to Romania.

Selection criteria range from rather general aspects such as political experience or knowledge on the functioning of European institutions to concrete requirements related to the capacity to gather support signatures or to fundraise for the electoral campaign. Not all parties have considered necessary to set up formal selection criteria, some leaving up space for political negotiations with coalition partners in that respect – as the case of PSD and PC. All Romanian parties have to finalize candidate lists up to April 8 and register them with the Central Electoral Bureau.

Estimation of voter turnout for the European elections in Romania – according to the vast majority of party leaders interviewed during the research – raises to a maximum of 30%, a descending trend in line with the majority of European Union Member States. Some of the Romanian political leaders consider that the future European scrutiny in Romania will be perceived as a major drawback by the Romanian electorate, as we are supposed to revert to the proportional representation/party lists vote – an electoral system which has been stigmatized in Romania as favoring incompetency and political clienteles. Nevertheless, this will be the first complete exercise of a European elected mandate for Romania's representatives, thus opening the dialogue and further familiarizing Romanian society with the importance of the European Parliament and the role of MEPs; consequently, the 2009 – 2014 mandate will have the role of educating both Romanian parties and the electorate in the spirit of a knowledgeable vote for future European scrutiny.

List of references

Relevant Legislation:

- Council Directive 93/109/EC of 6 December 1993;
- Law no. 33/2007 on organizing and process of elections for the European Parliament
- Government Emergency Ordinance no. 1/2007 modifying Law no. 33/2007;
- Government Emergency Ordinance no. 8/2007 modifying Law no. 33/2007;
- Government Emergency Ordinance no. 84/2007 modifying Law no. 33/2007;

Specialized literature:

- Institute for Public Policy, *Decline of voters' turnout in Romania*, 2009;

Official Documents:

- The Democrat Liberal Party Bylaws;
- The Social Democrat Party Bylaws
- (<http://www.psd.ro/documente.php>);
- The National Liberal Party Bylaws
- (<http://www.pnl.ro/Public/cat/18/Documente-fundamentale.html>);
- The Conservative Party Bylaws
- (<http://www.pur.ro/statut-doctrina>);
- The Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania Bylaws.
- Formal Criteria for Selecting Candidates in the EP Elections (PNL document for internal use);
- Formal Criteria for Selecting Candidates in the EP Elections (UDMR document provided on request)

Media resources:

- National Press Agency *Agerpres* daily bulletin;
- Central newspapers: *Adevarul*, *Cotidianul*, *Curentul*, *Curierul National*, *Evenimentul Zilei*, *Gandul*, *Jurnalul National*, *Romania Libera*, *Ziua*.

SLOVENIA

Introduction

Elections to the European Parliament (EP) in June 2009 will be the second elections for the seven seats assigned to be elected for the EP in Slovenia, which joined the EU in a group of eight Central and Eastern European States with Cyprus and Malta on 1 May 2004.

In the first elections, all major political parties were running for a seat. Rather surprisingly *Nova Slovenija* (New Slovenia – NSi) won two out of the seven seats, as did the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS) and Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LDS; though running jointly with Desus – Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia). Social Democrats (SD) won one seat.

This study analyses the formal and informal procedures for the selection of candidates and drawing up of the candidate lists for the elections to the EP in 2009. The political parties analysed are all the political parties currently represented in the Slovenian National Assembly (apart from the above mentioned SDS, LDS and SD, these are also Slovenian Popular Party – SLS, Zares – New Politics and Slovenian National Party – SNS). The study also covers NSi, which did not make it over the 4 % threshold in the last general elections held in September 2008, but is eligible for the study as it received over 2 % of the votes and nevertheless currently has two members of the EP (MEPs).

The study first outlines the main characteristics of the electoral system for the EP in Slovenia, pointing to the differences with the system in use in national elections. Though one would expect that these differences will have a bigger effect on formal procedures and that these will differ in respect to national elections, the analysis does not confirm this. It does, however, seem that the institutional setting accounts for differences in the informal part of the selection procedure, *i. e.* in the application of criteria in setting up the lists, and even more so in considering individual candidates and their eligibility.

Formal procedures as set up in party statute and rules of procedures governing elections in June 2009 are being analysed with respect to institutionalisation of the procedure and openness in terms of democratization and centralization. We look at the rule-making, nomination, drawing up (or suggestion) and confirmation stage of the process. We observe who in terms of how big and how widely represented the relevant body responsible for each stage is. For each party we give a comparison with national elections and if eligible with EP elections in 2004.

Informal procedures, which mostly take place between the nomination process and drawing up of the list are being presented and analysed. They are based on the interviews conducted with five current MEPs from Slovenia (covering all the political parties, which are currently represented in the EP) and with secretary-generals or other relevant persons

from each political party in Ljubljana. All together 14 interviews were conducted between 8 and 23 of January.

In the analysis the specific reference to the observation of gender balance is omitted since this is required by law and all political parties stress its observation. The analysis also does not include reference to each party's relations to or co-operation with the European-level party and/or group the Slovenian political party is a member of. The issue has been checked in all the interviews and in each case it has been said that the party is absolutely autonomous in any formal or informal rules and procedures it sets up and that there have been no talks about criteria for individual candidates or principles in composing the entire list. We only sensed an understanding of a subtly expressed preference by ALDE/ELDR for both Slovenian political parties belonging to it (LDS and Zares) to campaign on the joint list.

Institutional setting: Slovenia as one constituency

In line with general standards in the EU member states MEPs in Slovenia are voted in the proportional system with the possibility of a preferential vote. This system equals the system in use in Slovenia for its national elections in both its aspects, the proportionality and the principle of personalization.

What is different, however, in comparison to the national elections, is the size of the constituency. In case of national elections, Slovenia is divided into 8 constituencies. 88 out of 90 members of the National Assembly are elected in these, while the remaining two representatives are elected amongst the Italian and Hungarian minorities (each electing one representative). The threshold for entry into the National Assembly is 4 %.

With a view to electing seven candidates for the EP only, Slovenia is for the purposes of elections to the EP set up as one constituency.⁴⁹⁹ Political parties thus present their national lists of seven candidates. There is no threshold as the small number of elected parliamentarians assures the (high enough) threshold (Grad 2004: 22).

The selection procedures for establishing the candidate list are subject to internal party procedures. The law governing elections to the EP (Art. 15, par. 4) states that no candidate list should have less than 40 % of candidates of each sex, with at least one candidate of each sex in the upper half of the list. In practice this means that either three or four candidates must be of one sex or the other, with both sexes represented among the first three candidates on the list. Slovenian political parties refer to the rule as to the 'zip-method' and it is generally understood that the list begins with a candidate of one sex and continues with the other and so on interchangeably.

The difference in institutional setting suggests a greater centralisation of the decision-making over the candidate lists in terms of formal procedures, but even more, calls for a

⁴⁹⁹ The law governing the elections of MEPs in Slovenia (*Zakon o volitvah poslancev iz Republike Slovenije v Evropski parlament – ZVPEP-UPB1*), in its consolidated version was published in *Uradni list* (Official Journal), N 40-1660/2004 (20 April 2004) and includes the original law published in *Uradni list*, N 96/02 (14 November 2002) and the law amending it, published in *Uradni list*, N 22/04 (10 March 2004).

different electoral campaign strategy and as it is shown below, it affects consideration of different criteria in setting up the lists and individual candidates in some, but not all political parties.

Formal procedures: Party statutes and rules of procedure

Liberal Democracy of Slovenia – LDS

The council of the party, elected by the congress and consisting of 61 members, confirms the list of candidates for European as well as for national elections (Statute, Art. 23). This is the only reference to the European elections in the statute. The statute explicitly mentions that the executive committee (consisting of 14 members, eight of which hold leading positions in various organs of the party and 6 are elected members) suggests the candidate lists for elections into the Slovenian Parliament, but there is no specific reference to the EP. For purposes of the 2004 elections to the EP the council adopted rules of procedure, which remained unchanged for the 2009 elections. These rules of procedure in all the stages – nomination of the candidates, preparation of the list and confirmation of the list – equal those for the national elections (*cf. Krašovec 2005: 144*). This means that territorial and interest type organisational units, parliamentary group and all party governing bodies (organs), including expert committees are eligible to nominate a candidate. The council adopts the rules and confirms the list of candidates, acting on the basis of a proposal drafted by the executive committee. Rules of procedure also include the possibility for members of the council to suggest changes to the draft proposed by the executive committee, provided a third of members of the council second the proposed change. Simple majority is needed, first, to include the new candidate to the list and, second, to position her/him onto a specific post on the list. Rules of procedure also state that the executive committee should observe hitherto success and eligibility of candidates to perform the elected function.

Zares – New Politics

Zares is a new political party, founded in October 2007. A lot of its membership is drawn from the LDS and the party is headed by a former long-standing secretary-general of LDS. In June 2009 it will run for the EP for the first time. Following the national general elections in September 2008 it is the third biggest party in the National Assembly and forms part of the coalition government.

Party statute (Art. 13) states that the council of the party (consisting of 33 members, chairman of the main party bodies and elected representatives) adopts the rules of procedure, governing the selection of the candidates for national as well as European elections. Rules of procedure equal for elections to all representative organs. Every member of the party, main party organs, the parliamentary group and the youth section of the party can nominate candidates. The college of the president (consisting of president, vice-presidents, chairman of the council and secretary-general; amounting to ten members) prepares the draft recommendation of the list of candidates and presents it to the council. Members of the council can suggest other candidates for the list. Provided the suggestion is

seconded by one fourth of members of the council, it is voted upon the new suggested list and the candidate who receives most votes is selected.⁵⁰⁰

Social Democrats - SD

The statute (Art. 52) of the Social Democrats, states that a convention of the party, acting upon the recommendation by the presidency, confirms the candidate lists for national, presidential and elections to the EP and separate rules of procedure, adopted by the presidency, determines the process of selection. The presidency consists of 35 members, chairmen and chairwomen of main bodies, including interest-representation bodies and members elected by the congress. The convention is a special body set up exclusively for the purpose of confirming candidate lists and it consisted of 264 members for the October 2004 national elections. In the case of the 2004 European elections, a different body, then known as a 'conference' was set up, consisting of members of national parliament, members of the presidency, representative of interest-representation organs of the party and representatives of regional organisation, amounting to a number of 106, thus significantly lower than in case of an electoral convention for the national elections, suggesting a lower level of internal party democracy in case of selection of candidates for European elections (*cf.* Krašovec 2007: 196). The same body will be retained for the 2009 elections as well.

With the exception of the electoral conference, which has a lower number of members than the electoral convention in case of national elections, which confirms the list of candidates, the rest of the procedure equals to the national elections: the Presidency adopts the rules and prepares the list in both cases and same bodies: individual members, territorial and interest based organisational units and leading party bodies can propose candidates.

Slovenian Democratic Party – SDS

Statute of the SDS (in Art. 19) is most precise in setting out the procedures for candidacy of all the analysed political parties, though it does not specifically mention European elections (it is understood as rules governing election procedures for national general elections). No special rules of procedure are envisaged by the statute, but electoral rules specifically for elections in the EP were adopted in 2004 and for 2009, restating the criteria and procedure stated in the statute, as well as details on the procedures.

Territorial, interest-representation units and organs of the party including its expert bodies can nominate candidates. The council (a broad body with mainly territorial representation and members by function from other bodies, amounting to 250 – 300 members) can further decide to allow for individual members or executive bodies of local committees of the party to present nominations. It did so in the case of the 2004 national elections but not the European elections. However, this step has been taken during the course of preparations for the 2009 European elections, thus broadening the base for nominations and de-centralising the procedure in comparison to 2004 European elections. The list is drawn up by the executive committee (consisting of 27 members, 18 of which are elected by the congress, the

⁵⁰⁰ This procedure applies directly to the selection of candidates in electoral districts for national elections and has not yet been tested in case of Euroepan elections, where Slovenia is just one electoral unit.

rest are members by function in other governing bodies, including the president), after consultations with bodies of territorial-representation. The list is confirmed by the council (whereas in case of national elections the latter acts as electoral conference).

The same article in the statute (Art. 19) also sets out the following criteria governing the choice of candidates: reputation and recognisability of a candidate in Slovenia and in particular electoral district, possibility to be elected, i. e. expectation of a good electoral result based on opinion polls, results of a hitherto work and contribution to the implementation of the party programme, candidates public attitude towards the party and capacity to perform the duties of the function for which the candidate is nominated.

With the criteria being formalised, the SDS obviously sticks out (only SLS mentions vaguely the criteria, but no other party, in the statute as such). These rules suggest great observation of a de-centralisation principle, but in practice we also saw a slightly higher level of centralisation in the nomination stage for the EP elections in 2004 in comparison to national elections, which has been changed for the 2009 elections to the EP.

Nova Slovenija – NSi

The statute on NSi does not specifically refer to the elections to the EP. In 2004, procedures for both elections held that year, (European and national) were identical⁵⁰¹ (Krašovec 2005: 144). The council of the party (consisting of president, 25 members elected by congress, representatives of territorial and interest organisations and representatives of the party from the neighbouring countries and other countries/regions, where the party is organised), acting upon recommendations by the executive committee (consisting of 19 members, out of which eleven are elected by congress and the rest are representatives of interest-representation units and president and four vice-presidents), adopts rules for candidacy procedures. All governing bodies of the party, including those representing territorial organisational units, are eligible to nominate candidates. In addition, members of the party can suggest nominees to the main organs of the party. In 2004 the list was drawn up by the president and confirmed by the executive committee. In 2009 it is envisaged for the list to be drawn up by the college of the president (an informal body, consisting of president, vice-presidents, president of the council and secretary-general, amounting to six members) and not the president alone and it will be, as in 2004, presented to the executive committee for approval.

A significantly low level of institutionalisation of candidacy procedures in general, a highly de-centralised nomination stage and a lower level of democracy in decision-making stage can be observed. The latter slightly changed in 2009, with the college of the president deciding upon the list and not the president alone.

Slovenian Popular Party – SLS

The statute determines that the council of the party (consisting of 25 members, elected by the congress, including the president and one representative of each regional committee)

⁵⁰¹ Consider re-wording this sentence as it does not read very well at the moment

confirms the candidates for all types of elections (local, national and other) (Art. 25) and it also adopts rules for candidacy, on recommendation by the executive committee of the party (Art. 66).

The party statute also includes an article (Art. 67) on eligible candidates. It states that the party needs to pay special attention to candidates who are hardworking and respectable and with good reputation in the milieu where they live.

In 2004 the rules stated that the list of the candidates is drawn up by the executive committee (consisting of 14 members), and the candidates may be nominated by territorial and interest-representation units (the latter not being the case in the same year's national elections) and by the executive committee. In the nomination stage of the process we can thus observe a greater level of decentralisation in comparison to selection procedure for national elections.

The rules of procedure for the June 2009 elections are scheduled to be adopted by mid-February.

Democratic party of pensioners of Slovenia – Desus

Desus Statute state that the council (consisting of 40 elected members, in election of which the principle of territorial representation needs to be observed, and chairman of major governing bodies of the party) of the party determines the ways and procedures for candidacy, including criteria for nomination (Art. 51). Whereas the statute determines in great detail the procedures for national elections, in reference to European elections, they only state that an electoral conference, consisting of the council of the party, confirms candidates for the elections. The rules for national elections can not be applied directly to the European elections as they specifically refer to constituencies, whereas in the case of European elections, the entire Slovenia is just one constituency.

The analysis of candidate procedures in both 2004 elections (national and European) shows that the council adopted the rules of procedure and also confirmed the list. It did the latter, however, in its formation as an electoral conference. Candidates were nominated by the territorial organisations of the party and the executive committee (consisting of 19 elected and non-elected members, the latter holding chairmanship functions of different bodies) drew up the list of candidates. The procedure for the EP elections varied from the national elections only in the last stage; i. e. in the elections for the EP the council was formed into the electoral conference, which confirmed the list of candidates. (Krašovec 2005: 144 – 146)

The main characteristic of Desus' selection procedures are thus a lower level of institutionalisation in comparison to the national elections and a high level of decentralization in the nomination stage.

Slovenian National Party - SNS

The statute of Slovenian National Party (SNS) does not mention the European level elections specifically, but they generally state that special rules of procedure are adopted by the presidency of the party for the election purposes (Art. 48).

The 2004 rules of procedure state that candidates can be nominated by territorial organisational units, members of national parliament, the president, a group of members and the council of the party. The list is drawn up by the president in consultation with the presidency and given to the presidency for confirmation.

The process does not differ from the process for the purpose of national elections, but in comparison to other political parties generally a lower level of democracy can be observed, not only in the drawing up stage, where the president has bigger powers, but also the presidency is composed of a lower number of chairman of main bodies, vice-presidents, members of national parliament and presidents of regional units of the party (amounting to 15 members).

Table 1 below summarizes the differences in the four stages of the selection procedures of all eight political parties analysed.⁵⁰² The numbers in brackets represent the number of members of the body in question.

⁵⁰² The model of the table is adapted from Krašovec (2005: 145) and Krašovec (2007: 195), data are from own research.

Table 1: Selection procedures by Slovenian political parties for elections to the EP in 2009

• LDS	• Zares	• SD	• SDS	• NSi	• SLS	• Desus	• SNS
• Who adopts the rules?							
Council (61)	Cou ncil (33)	Presid ency (35)	Cou ncil (250- 300)	Cou ncil (45)	Council (25)	Cou ncil (40)	Presid ency (15)
• Who can nominate the candidates?							
Individual members	•	• X	• X	•	•	•	•
Territorial units	• X	•	• X	• X *	• X	• X	• X
Interest-representation units	• X	•	• X	• X	•	• X	•
Parliamentary group	• X	• X	•	•	•	•	•
Main organs of the Party	• X	• X	• X	• X	• X * * Executive committee only	•	Council only
Expert committees	• X	•	•	• X	•	•	•
Other	•	Youth section	•	•	•	•	MPs,*** group of members, president
• Who draws up the (draft) list of candidates?							
Executive committee (14)****	College of the president (10)****	Presidency (35)	Executive committee (in consultation with territorial units; 29)	College of the president (6)	Executive committee (14)	Executive committee (19)	President in consultation with the Presidency (15)

- Who confirms the list?

Council (61)

Council (33)

(electoral)
Conference (106)

Council (250-
300)

Executive
committee (19)

Council (25)

Council (as
electoral
conference; 40)

Presidency (15)

* including individual members or executive bodies of local committees

** individual members can propose nominations to the organs

*** MPs = members of Slovenian National Assembly

**** draft recommendations with established rules that allow changes in the confirmation stage

Informal procedures: criteria used in establishing candidate lists

Liberal Democracy of Slovenia – LDS

At the time of the first election to the EP in Slovenia in 2004, the LDS was the biggest party in the government, which was also the case for most of the period since Slovenia's independence in 1991. The party was counting on winning at best three and at worst two out of the seven seats in the EP. It entered the campaign together with Desus, in a joint agreement over the candidates from Desus and their placement on the list (one Desus candidate placed on the second place). The list was headed by a long serving and high profiled LDS member (with acknowledged excellent rhetoric skills), followed by a well renowned foreign correspondent (not affiliated to either of the parties prior to that, but invited to campaign on the list in the second place). Other candidates were regionally dispersed, but their reputation was national (they were renowned businessman, sportswoman, etc.). The possibility to be elected of top candidates on the list was checked via an opinion poll, which indeed affected the decision over the placement of the first three candidates.

The rationale behind the list was to create a list of personalities with excellent reputation and adherence to liberal democracy as a principle, with equilibrium between personalities high in the hierarchy of the party, regional representation and professional variety. The list as such was created with a view of giving support to the top candidates, but due to the possibility of being elected through the preferential vote, all candidates on the list were considered as not entirely lacking a chance to be elected.

In 2009, with two MEPs already having served one term and who might run for the second one, the party will again count more on personalities than the party. Specific fields of expertise, especially with a view to current European and global issues with a view of EU competences in the field, will be given greater value in drawing up the list of candidates (at the expense of political, legislative or other experience, though general knowledge of European affairs is necessary). This is not only considered to be valued in the campaign, but as a true asset for the work in the EP committees, including the better chances of being a rapporteur on a specific issue. The order on the list might again be preliminary checked via the opinion poll. It needs to be mentioned that results of the last national elections are not being considered as an indicator of a possibility to be elected, since European elections are considered to have a different nature, primarily due to a greater value placed upon personality; nor is prior presence in the media.

In comparison to the criteria that make up candidate lists for the national elections, the image of a personality nationally and regionally, as well a specific field of expertise, are being considered to a greater extent, at the expense of criteria related to political experience and party fidelity and hierarchy.

Zares – New Politics

Balanced regional coverage and recognisability, primarily achieved through experience in either political, business or cultural life of Slovenia are the two guiding principles in setting up the candidate list of Zares in its first campaign for the elections to the EP. In drawing up the list, the party will pay special attention to people with experience in elected bodies and with international experience (e. g. in the Council of Europe or in the European Parliament). In terms

of professional expertise, the party wishes to match its goals with candidates who will be credible in terms of pursuing them. Professional expertise in environmental affairs or sustainable development is one such example, which will be seriously considered in drawing up the list of candidates. In case of several options for the top posts on the list, the party is considering ordering a professional opinion poll to check on the possibility to be elected of the considered (two or three) candidates to head the list.

Social Democrats – SD

The guiding principles in setting up the candidate list are the possibility to be elected and adherence to the party programme (but not membership of the party). When drafting the list in 2004, regional representation, generational coverage, gender equilibrium and educational/professional variety were considered as criteria which needed to be balanced. The possibility to be elected was then tested by an opinion poll, entrusted to a professional pollster. On the basis of the results of the poll, the list of seven candidates was drawn up by the secretariat and cabinet of the president and presented to the presidency. Though personal characteristics, media attractiveness and rhetorical skills were considered, they were believed to form part of the possibility to be elected and the results of the opinion poll were crucial in this respect. Language skills were not put as a criteria, not even questioned, it was simply assumed that the candidates master some foreign language (e. g. English). It needs to be mentioned that the President of the SD, Borut Pahor, was put last on the list to raise the profile of the party as such. Eventually, he was the only one from the list to be elected via the preferential vote.

In 2009 SD is the biggest governmental party after having won the general elections held in September 2008 (Borut Pahor is the Prime Minister). This change also affects considerations in drawing up the list as well as criteria for candidates. Expertise and recognisability are primary criteria in relation to individual personality, and territorial, generational and expert variety continue to be considered as crucial in drawing up the list. Experience in international politics is considered as an advantage, but secondary to expertise in relevant fields (current European and global issues and EP competence being considered) and to the capability to defend the party standpoints in the campaign and in the course of a mandate in the EP. The last national elections are not considered to be an indicator for the possibility of becoming elected. European elections are perceived as more similar to the presidential elections, with personality playing a bigger role than the political party. Once again, the party might order an opinion poll as an additional indicator for the placement on the list, especially for the top posts.

Slovenian Democratic Party – SDS

The SDS party statute institutionalise the criteria for candidate's nominations and these criteria play a vital role in selection of individual candidates as well as in drawing up of the list as such. Though the principles of territoriality and generational dispersion are considered, they are secondary to experience and service to the party. The individual personalities are considered to a greater extent than the list as such. This can also be observed in the placements on the lower part of the list in 2004, with people who would not be elected, but are not placed there to balance the list on some professional or territorial principle or to raise the profile of the list, but with a view to gaining experience and making themselves known for the next coming local or national elections. The list in 2004 was drawn up with special consideration for 'who is needed at home' and 'who can be spared and do good in the European Parliament'.

In 2009, following the elections in which SDS lost (they came second), the situation is rather different than for the 2004 EP elections, which preceded national elections and for which SDS had high hopes and also won them later in the year. The list for the June 2009 elections is very likely to be composed exclusively by experienced high profile politicians (ministers in the former government lead by SDS), which will automatically raise the profile of the list. It needs to be mentioned that particular field of expertise is not understood as particularly relevant due to two reasons: first, national issues are believed to prevail in the course of the campaign and, second, there is no assurance that a particular candidate, if elected, will be given a chance to be active in his or her field of expertise during the mandate. Foreign language knowledge is understood as self-evident. The results from the last national elections are considered as an indicator of a possibility to be elected.

Nova Slovenija – NSi

The executive committee and the college of the president (an informal organ) prepared a list of criteria, which should be observed to the greatest possible extent, but which, at the same time, are explicitly said to serve as a reference only. The list singles out the following criteria: education (but it does not specify the level), respect, reputation and recognisability of a candidate in Slovenia and Europe, success and political experience with responsible posts in executing the political programme of the party, international political and expert experience, balanced gender, age and territorial dispersion, active knowledge of one and passive of another foreign language (EU language) and possibility to be elected, taking into account results of the previous elections or, if available (but not commissioned), opinion polls.

Although gender balance, age and territorial dispersion of candidates on the list is among the criteria, the balance on these criteria plays a secondary if not tertiary role in coming about of the candidate list. Unlike 4 years ago, there seems to be an agreement to include one candidate from the youth branch of the party onto the candidate list. The territorial representation is being considered to a certain extent, but with the head of the list in 2004 and most probably also in 2009 (Mr. Peterle) being a very nationally prominent figure, the party puts much more weight on individual personalities than the party or the balance of personalities on the candidate list. When it comes to personality, it highly values experience and competence. In comparison to other parties, the list of eligibility criteria in terms of personal characteristics and experience as set above is most detailed. The criteria clearly set out competence and experience in European affairs. The particular field of expertise does not play a visible role. It is also understood that national issues will prevail in the campaign and it is thus necessary for the candidate to master national politics in general.

The NSi also traditionally, provided they have been successful and active representatives, favours current M(E)Ps. The current position of NSi in Slovenian politics (it did not pass the 4 % threshold at the last national elections to enter the parliament) and its subsequent financial situation also make it more probable to campaign with a well established personalities with a good reputation.

Slovenian Popular Party - SLS

The general principle governing the establishing of the list as such is an overall representation of diversity of candidates in terms of knowledge and profession and a broad territorial representation. General rules for candidacy in the party give priority to candidates with a good reputation and a good result at the previous local or national elections. Though the party supports greater inclusion of young people in politics and in the party, generational dispersion is not considered. All in all, these criteria do not differ from those in use for national or local elections.

Democratic party of pensioners of Slovenia - Desus

In 2004 Desus joined the LDS in the campaign for the EP and had its own candidate on the second post on the joined candidate list. Ms Drčar-Murko was not a member of either of the parties. She is a well-known foreign correspondent for national TV was elected to the EP.

In 2009 the party is considering not campaigning for the EP at all. Its situation in national politics has changed considerably. Until the last elections the party was barely passing the threshold (4 %) to enter the national parliament, but in 2008 it came out as the fourth biggest party in the parliament and entered the coalition, as the third party in the coalition (LDS being fourth) and holds three ministerial posts. The reasons for not running for the EP are threefold: (i) the time span between the September 2008 national elections and June 2009 European elections is too short for the party to recover financially in order to be able to run a decent campaign that would confirm its newly gained position; with local elections following in 2010, they will begin to focus on those; (ii) the profile of their voters (extremely high percentage of women above 58 years of age) suggests a lesser importance of European elections as they are remote to their immediate concerns; (iii) their programme as well as competences of the EP support the decision not to run. Desus concentrates on measures in social and health policy. The party programme is very locally oriented, focused on improving every day conditions for socially most vulnerable groups.

In this view, no criteria for the candidates for 2009 have been considered. For 2004, however, the party looked for the candidate with the possibility of being elected and adherence to the programme of the party.

Slovenian National Party - SNS

In SNS the candidate list will be drawn up by consensus in the presidency of the party. No formal rules of procedure are in place, no stage in the process is formalised. The party does not expect its candidates to actually be elected as they have a too low support base and are furthermore also very critical towards the EP, preferring instead to concentrate on the national general and 2010 local elections. Unlike Desus, SNS consider that campaigning for the EP is important in order to remain visible on the political scene, raise the profile of some candidates and gain experience for the following local elections. These three reasons (visibility of the party, profile of future candidates and experience gained for newcomers) will also affect the composition of the candidate list of SNS. They will not consider territorial principle.

Conclusion

The analysis of formal selection procedures for the elections to the EP by eight Slovenian political parties shows that there has been no adaptation of the selection procedures in neither of the stages (rules of procedure, nomination, drawing up of the list, confirmation of the list) with regard to the different institutional conditions for the EP elections formed by a single constituency.

Though the selection procedures are the same for both types of election, in some parties we can observe a lower level of institutionalisation of a selection procedure in the case of European elections. The parties, however, irrespective of the type of elections, differ among themselves, with SDS and SNS on both ends of the extreme: the former with highly formalised and the latter with completely informal procedures. At the same time, comparing the 2004 and 2009 European elections, a slight step towards de-centralisation in the nomination stage and democratisation in the drawing up of the list can be observed in some political parties (*i. e.* SDS, NSi).

The specific nature of elections to the EP, also as a consequence of a different institutional setting, however, affects considerations of criteria for eligible candidates and criteria guiding the composition of the entire list of candidates. In comparison to national elections, we can observe greater weight placed on individual personality(ies) and on balancing of different characteristics of candidates on the entire list.

All political parties place the greatest weight on the possibility of being elected, based primarily on reputation or recognisability. They use either opinion polls or results of the last elections as an indicator. Though availability of resources plays a role in the choice of an indicator, the parties which are very likely to order an opinion poll (LDS, Zares, SD) understand European elections are fundamentally different from the national ones.

There are three issues on which the parties differ in their considerations of eligibility of individual candidates and the composition of the entire lists: (i) the question of value placed on the entire list of candidates or on the top personalities; (ii) the question of particular expertise vs. political experience of candidates and (iii) the role of the candidates on the lower part of the list. As for the latter, we see that some political parties consider them primarily in terms of territorial and professional balance and in order to raise the profile of the party, while others understand their placement on the list as an opportunity to get experience and raise their own profile for the next (national or local) elections. The divide on professional vs. political experience goes parallel with the previous divide: the parties, which place more weight on the balanced composition of the list, also consider current European and global issues as well as EU competences in the field important in terms of campaign strategy as well as in order to perform the work of the MEP successfully. Parties, which regard a specific professional expertise to be important, also place more value on the equally strong and balanced list as such, than on (a low number of) individual (political) personalities on the top of the list.

The dividing line on all the above issues, including understanding that European elections are different from national elections, also crosses the left – right divide in Slovenian party politics. In placing individual candidates and setting up the lists, parties placed in the centre and left to it (LDS, Zares, SD) place value on the entire list of candidates, specific expertise and balance in terms of territorial dispersion and professional variety. On the other hand, parties right from the centre (SDS, NSi, SNS and SLS to a limited extent) are more concentrated on individual

personalities, political experience and also see European elections more as part of domestic politics and thus regard them in terms of preparations for next national or local elections.

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SLOVAKIA

Introduction

The aim of this report is to describe and analyze the procedures applied by Slovakia's political parties to establish their electoral lists of candidates for the elections to the European parliament. First, we look at five political parties whose candidates entered the European parliament in 2004. Second, we consider other relevant political parties based on national parliamentary elections both in 2002 and in 2006. In analyzing the selection procedure for each of the parties we respectively look at three issues: formal selection procedure, criteria for selection and informal communication within the party, the impact of the European political parties on domestic selection process of candidates for the EP. We draw on official documents, secondary sources such as newspapers and internet as well as interviews with various representatives of political parties. The report on individual parties is followed with a short summary of the main findings. We then list three tables summarizing the results of Slovakia's parliamentary elections in 2002, EP elections in 2004 and parliamentary elections in 2006. Finally, we include a list of abbreviations.

We find that selection of candidates for most relevant positions on a party list (1-3) is centralized on national level. Regional bodies in political parties also nominate candidates but these are only relevant in the case of SDKÚ-DS because of its system of primaries in selecting the party's candidates for the European parliament. Generally, candidates selected by regional structures of political parties end up on unelectable positions on party lists. We also conclude that political parties currently present in European parliament decided to nominate most of their current MEPs again because of their experience and established contacts. Young candidates (age category 30-35 or younger) reached lower positions on candidate lists whereby young candidates should gain experience by joining the election campaign. Gender was declared by several party representatives as an important criterion in 2009 elections, but only the final candidate lists to be registered at the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic before elections may substantiate those claims. Informal communication is important in every party, but more significant in those parties with stronger and well established local, district and regional structures represented also at the national level (for example the SMK and the KDH). Setting the order of candidates on list for EP elections is crucial. Preferential voting in the 2004 EP elections helped only one candidate in one political party (SMK). Cooperation within European political parties and groups is considered important and it works in favour of nominating the current MEPs' for EP elections in 2009. However, other practical relevance of European political parties and groups in the selection process of candidates is rather limited.

Political Parties in the European Parliament

Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia – Demokratická strana (Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party - SDKÚ-DS)

The SDKÚ-DS, founded in 2000 and headed by former Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda⁵⁰³, has been the largest opposition party in Slovakia since the parliamentary elections in 2006. It is a centre-right party that won the highest number of votes in the last elections to the EP in 2004. It has about 6000 registered members.⁵⁰⁴

Procedure

The Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ-DS) has the most complex internal procedure for the selection of candidates for elections to the European Parliament. Detailed description of this procedure adopted prior to EP elections in 2004 is publicly available on the party's website (*Rules for internal elections of the SDKÚ-DS for elections to the European parliament*).⁵⁰⁵ In summary, there is a two-step process for selecting the candidates. First, there is the selection of a leader for the party list in EP elections. A leader can be proposed by the party's Presidency, Regional presidency (there are eight Regional presidencies in Slovakia's eight self-governing regions) or at least 500 members of the SDKÚ-DS. According to official rules, the Presidency of the party announces the selection process for a leader in EP elections and accepts proposals up to two weeks since the announcement of the selection process.⁵⁰⁶ The official rules also stipulate the procedure for holding a primary election to select the party's leader. In practice however, prior to EP elections both in 2004 and in 2009 there was only one proposed leader by the party's Presidency.⁵⁰⁷ Therefore, the SDKÚ-DS has not organized primaries for the selection of its leader in EP elections.

Second, once the leader is selected, the party proceeds in organizing primary voting for the rest of the candidates. In 2004 the final party list contained fourteen names since Slovakia had the quota of 14 MEPs. This year the party will enter thirteen candidates on the list to fill the MEP slots allotted to Slovakia in 2009. The primary election proceeds in the following steps. The Presidency of the SDKÚ-DS announces the call for nominees for the list of candidates in EP elections. It then allows up to three weeks⁵⁰⁸ for the submission of candidates who can be proposed by the Presidency, Regional presidency or at least 100 members of the party. Members of the party then vote in primaries whereby they choose from two categories of candidates on the voting list. One category contains up to five nominees of the party's Presidency and a voting member of the party has to choose two nominees in this category. Another category contains nominees of Regional presidencies or nominees of party members affiliated under a Regional

⁵⁰³ Mikuláš Dzurinda was Prime Minister for eight years and he headed two different coalition governments (from 1998 to 2002 and from 2002 to 2006).

⁵⁰⁴ Interview with the party's secretary for foreign relations conducted on 22 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵⁰⁵ See www.sdkuonline.sk for *Zásady vnútrostraníckych volieb SDKÚ pre voľby do Európskeho parlamentu*, adopted on 14 February 2004.

⁵⁰⁶ This period can be shortened for up to one week if the selection of a leader takes place after the official announcement of EP elections in Slovakia.

⁵⁰⁷ Peter Šťastný was the leader of the SDKÚ-DS list in 2004 elections. Former Foreign Minister for eight years (1998-2006) Eduard Kukan was nominated as the leader of the party in this 2009 elections.

⁵⁰⁸ This period will be shortened for up to one week if the selection of a leader takes place after the official announcement of EP elections in Slovakia.

presidency based on the candidate's permanent residence in Slovakia. A party member has to choose five names in this category from at least four different regions of Slovakia.

The results of primaries produce the list of candidates placed on the list after the leader of the party in EP elections. Thus, the number two on the list is a nominee of the Presidency who gets the most votes in primaries. The number three on the list is a nominee of the regions who gets the most votes in primaries. The number four on the list is a nominee of the Presidency with the second highest score in primaries whereas the number five on the list is a nominee of regions with the second highest score in primaries. Following this logic, the list of candidates is completed down to the last name whereby based on this voting procedure the Presidency formally approves the final list of candidates for EP elections.

Criteria and informal communication

There is no official criteria for potential candidates for the EP. The system of primaries does allow anybody inside the party to run. In practice the Presidency and regional structures of the party possess decisive voice in pre-selecting the candidates. The primaries can mainly alter the order of candidates on the final list for EP elections.

From recent data we can conclude that previous international and EP experience matters significantly for succeeding in the party's selection. Since the primary voting for candidates in this year's EP elections took place on 8 February 2009, we now know that following the leader Eduard Kukan, Peter Šťastný will be the number two on the list and Milan Gaľa is going to be candidate number three.⁵⁰⁹ Both Šťastný and Gaľa are current MEPs for SDKÚ-DS while Kukan is Slovakia's former Minister of Foreign Affairs and has been a member of Slovakia's national parliament (National Council of the Slovak Republic) since the parliamentary elections in 2006. In addition, Zita Pleštinská, another current MEP for the SDKÚ-DS, is also on the list as the number six. Plus, Milan Gaľa's current assistant in the EP Júlia Hurná is the number nine on the SDKÚ-DS list of candidates for 2009 EP elections.

The SDKÚ-DS is a real exception among Slovakia's political parties in organizing its primaries for the selection of candidates for the European Parliament. While the detailed procedure for primaries does allow for a possible political competition and democratic participation of party members in deciding who gets to run for the EP, it also potentially drains internal resources that could be otherwise used towards a more intensive campaign by the party. Hence, there are real influential voices inside the SDKÚ-DS calling for a simplification or even total scrapping of the current method selecting candidates for the EP.⁵¹⁰

European political party and groups

The SDKÚ-DS is a member of the European People's Party – European Democrats (EPP-ED). The EPP-ED has not played any direct role in the selection of SDKU's candidates for EP elections though according to the party's secretary for foreign relations the EPP-ED promised support in the course of domestic campaign before elections in June 2009. However, the nature of this support still remains unclear since the EPP-ED cannot provide finances. It is also worth noting that Peter Šťastný, leader of Slovakia's delegation in the EPP-ED, was not a member of the SDKÚ-DS until 2007. Thus, the link between the party and the EPP-ED was formally less direct.

⁵⁰⁹ The complete list of candidates of SDKÚ-DS for EP elections in June 2009 is available on www.sdkuonline.sk.

⁵¹⁰ Interview with the party's secretary for foreign relations conducted on 22 January 2009 in Bratislava.

SMER – Sociálna demokracia (SMER – Social Democracy - SMER-SD)

SMER-SD, led by Slovakia's current Prime Minister Robert Fico, has been the strongest political party in Slovakia since the parliamentary elections in 2006 (see the Table on the results of Slovakia's parliamentary elections). Since July 2006 SMER-SD has governed in a coalition with the Slovak National Party (SNS) together with the People's Party - Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (ĽS-HZDS). In 2004 elections to the EP the party SMER-SD gained three seats in the EP.

Procedure

The procedure for selecting candidates for the EP is the same as in the case of domestic parliamentary elections. The Chairman of the party SMER-SD proposes the list of candidates for EP elections to the Presidency of the party SMER-SD. The Presidency consists of a maximum of 38 members including members who have been co-opted by the Presidency of the party. The Presidency can co-opt up to 4 members. The approval of the list of candidates by the party Presidency requires the presence of at least half of the members of the Presidency and a vote of approval by a majority of present members of the Presidency. In the event of a tie, the Chairman of the party holds the decisive vote.⁵¹¹ At the moment the Presidency of SMER-SD has 36 members.⁵¹²

Criteria and informal communication

There are no specific formal criteria but one can infer from the selection of candidates thus far that international and especially EU experience are important. Currently, SMER-SD has three MEPs. Monika Beňová was a co-founder of the party in 1999 and previously served as the head of the Committee for European Integration in Slovakia's parliament from 2002 to 2004. Vladimír Maňka as a former member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic was a member of domestic parliamentary Committee for European Integration and a member of the Joint parliamentary Committee EU-SR from 1998 to 2002. Although the party leadership indicated in the fall of 2008 that by January 2009 the Presidency of SMER-SD would approve the list of candidates for EP elections, it did not do so officially due to other priorities such as the challenges of current economic and financial crisis. Because the list of candidates was still pending, it was difficult to find out specific details about informal communication inside the party SMER-SD.⁵¹³ All we know at the moment that Boris Zala, current Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee in Slovakia's parliament, is going to be the leader of the party list for EP elections in June 2009. Vladimír Maňka, current MEP and Deputy Chairman of the party SMER-SD, is going to be the number two on the list of the party's candidates for the EP.⁵¹⁴ Hence, international and EP experience do play an important role.

European political party and groups

Since SMER-SD has governed in a coalition with the nationalist Slovak National Party (SNS) together with the populist Movement for a Democratic Slovakia – People's Party (HZDS-ĽS), the party has so far not become a full-fledged member of the Party of the European Socialists (PES). However, based on the monitoring of Slovakia's government since 2006, the Presidency of the PES decided to reactivate the candidature of the party SMER-SD on 14 February 2008. The

⁵¹¹ See article 12 of SMER-SD's statute *Stanovy politickej strany SMER – sociálna demokracia*, 30 September 2006.

⁵¹² The list of the members of the Presidency of SMER-SD is available on <http://www.strana-smer.sk/index.php?id=predsednictvo>.

⁵¹³ Telephone conversation with an assistant to an MP from SMER-SD, 22 January 2009.

⁵¹⁴ "Smer bude podporovať Gašparoviča" in SITA press agency, 26 November 2008.

congress of the PES in the fall of 2009 should definitely decide on membership of SMER-SD. While there is no direct influence of the PES in deciding the list of candidates in SMER-SD, Vladimír Maňka's presence on this year's list of candidates as the number two also has a broader EP element to it. On 13 January 2009 Maňka was elected the EP rapporteur for EU budget in 2010 and he received full support of the socialist MEPs.⁵¹⁵

Ludová strana- Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko (People's party- Movement for Democratic Slovakia - LS-HZDS)

Despite a decreasing number of its voters, Ľudová strana - Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko still has the biggest number⁵¹⁶ of party members ranging from 30,000 to 35,000 people⁵¹⁷.

Procedure

Before Slovakia's first elections to the European Parliament in 2004, party Chairman Vladimír Mečiar decided to run a specific procedure for selecting the candidates. The procedure was prepared by the party's secretariat. As in the case of national elections, the party leader asked regional structures⁵¹⁸ to nominate candidates according these basic criteria: university degree and foreign language knowledge. A group of about 30 possible candidates was selected and the selection process continued with an interview to prove the language skills and a multiple-choice test to review their basic knowledge about the EU, its functions, legislative process etc. The interview and the test were supervised by a group of 5 representative members of the party including a Member of Parliament, a student of international relations and others, who selected 14 candidates. In the case of several respected members of the party as the former minister and the number one candidate Sergej Kozlík and some others, the selection committee decided not to require participation in the interview and the test. Despite this some of them as current MEPs Peter Baco and Irena Belohorská (both former ministers) participated voluntarily. The final list was confirmed by the party's Nomination Assembly as required by the party statute. Nomination Assembly is convened by the Republic Party Board⁵¹⁹ that is also formally responsible for stating selection criteria and a procedure.

In 2009 elections no strict selection process was applied. The Republic Party Board again asked regional structures to nominate candidates and at the same time decided that all current MEPs will be on the party's list of candidates. Sergej Kozlík was selected for number one position again. The list of candidates without order was confirmed by the Nomination Assembly that

⁵¹⁵ See press information on www.socialistgroup.org.

⁵¹⁶ The HZDS was similarly to the KDH established as a broad movement that slowly transformed into a political party (officially registered in 1991). First official number of registered members is available from 1994 (around 40 thousands) because previously HZDS formally did not require membership (in Malová Darina: Slovensko po roku 1989 politika a spoločnosť, Bratislava: 1997). During its time in power the movement invested lots of efforts to building a big and strong membership base and a regional network that is nowadays decreasing. The transformation into the People's Party took place in 2000 and finished in 2003 when the party's name was officially changed to Ľudová strana- Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko.

⁵¹⁷ Estimate by the main party secretary during interview conducted on 19 January, 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵¹⁸ The party hierarchy is the following (from below): Local organisations- Municipal organisations- District organisations- Regional organisations- the Highest Party Bodies: Republic Control Committee, Republic Arbitral Committee, Republic Political Party Board, Republic Council, Republic Party Board, Republic Congress,. (LS-HZDS party statutes, 3 December 2007)

⁵¹⁹ The Republic Party Board members are elected by the Republic Congress and can be substituted rather easily in the case of 2 absences without excuse. Party chairman and the main secretary usually represent the board. According to statutes also MPs, MEPs, party members of government and other invited guests but their vote is only deliberative.

was organized as a part of the extraordinary Republic Congress held in October 2008. The Congress was called to settle the issue of a presidential candidate and also some other personnel issues were resolved. Due to these circumstances not so much public attention was devoted to the candidate list though it is still an interesting question. Chairman Mečiar's strategy is to force all candidates to be active before elections because the final order of candidates will be specified by the Republic Party Board only shortly before submitting the list officially to the Ministry of Interior.

Criteria and informal communication

The main reason for nominating MEPs is their experience and contacts and some internal efforts to establish continuity in the party's work in the EP. As the main secretary pointed out in an interview⁵²⁰ the "new" member states miss the stable system while in the "old" member states there is quite a narrow space for selecting new candidates and continuity is maintained. The Secretary stated that even though there was no strict procedure this time it was very important for LS-HZDS to give opportunities to young people, especially in the case of international affairs and European integration. Young nominees have not reached high positions on list, but on the other hand, in 2004 they were offered posts of MEPs' assistants or positions in political bodies of the EP. Gender equality is another criterion. The unwritten formula for candidate list is alternation of a man and a woman and a young person. The unknown order of candidates creates space for more important informal communication in the party.

European political party and groups

In the 2004-09 electoral period the LS-HZDS MEPs worked within the Independence/Democracy Group. Due to its undemocratic ruling practices in 1990s the LS-HZDS had long-term problems to fit in European political parties. For example LS-HZDS party could not join the EPP because of the disapproval by its Slovak members (KDH and SMK-MKP). Nowadays the LS-HZDS is an affiliated member of the European Democratic Party, member of ALDE group. The party has been negotiating with the ALDE Group so that the newly elected MEPs will be included in the political group. Being a regular member of a European political party and political group is seen as an improvement for the LS-HZDS's image abroad and of course provides a chance to work within the European parliament's bodies. Moreover the work within the Independence/Democracy Group is considered in the party as useful experience for LS-HZDS MEPs as it allows them to establish contacts, get to know the agenda of individual fractions in the EP and channels for gaining influence.

Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie (Christian Democratic Movement - KDH)

Christian Democrats as one of the oldest parties in Slovak Republic⁵²¹ are known for well established regional network and in Slovak terms⁵²² high (but decreasing) number of party members⁵²³. The party experienced several internal break-ups and the last one in February 2008

⁵²⁰ Interview with the main party secretary was conducted on 19 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵²¹ KDH was originally established as an anti-communist movement and transformed into political party in 1990. During the transformation process KDH created a stable and well covered regional network including secretariat (in Malová Darina: Slovensko po roku 1989 politika a spoločnosť, Bratislava: 1997). Despite later fragmentation and decline of voters at the national level, the KDH's persistent characteristic is its regional presence.

⁵²² Available figures from 2007 estimate that about 100 000 citizens are registered party members. (News Agency of the Slovak Republic, July 19,2007)

⁵²³ Last available official number of registered party members is 15 927 in 2007.

brought to life a new party *Konzervatívni demokrati Slovenska* (Conservative Democrats of Slovakia - KDS) led by a former Minister of Interior Vladimír Palko. KDS announced the creation of common candidate list with another euro-sceptic party, *Občiansko-konzervatívna strana* (Civic-Conservative Party)⁵²⁴. This is the only example of a coalition of political parties in this year's elections to the European Parliament.

Procedure

According to KDH representatives⁵²⁵ the procedures for EP elections are similar to national parliamentary elections. Specifically, proposals for candidates originate from the party's Presidency and are also collected from the regional party structures whereby the final decision is taken at the national level by the so-called Republic Council meeting⁵²⁶. Nomination of a candidate at a regional level is confirmed by voting at meetings of a district's centre. The Republic Council⁵²⁷ is one of the central party bodies, responsible for the work of the party between its congresses that take place every 2 years. A final list of candidates is created on the basis of the Republic Council's discussion following a short introduction of individual candidates. The ballot is actually divided into 2 rounds and first seven candidates are elected individually, whereas the rest of the list is passed as a group of candidates. Each candidate voted on individually has to be elected in the first round by a simple majority. If a candidate does not get the simple majority of votes, a second round of votes between the two strongest candidates follows. Again, a simple majority suffices. In the case that none of the candidates is elected even in the second round, a new ballot with new candidates is called.

A very important issue is the choice of the candidate number one recommended by the party Presidency. It was understood within the party that the nomination and voting for current vice-chair for international relations, Martin Fronc represented a confirmation of his position in this function. The Presidency also recommended including all current members of European Parliament in the list but without any specific order. The MEPs were also backed by support from individual regions. The party decided to nominate young people below number 5 on the party's list. These nominees will hardly be elected; they will participate on the campaign to gain some skills and experience.

Criteria and informal communication

The KDH has not set any strict list of criteria for candidates. But it is understood that already some international experience and contacts of individual MEPs are important advantages. Every MEP submits to the party a report of his/her activities and representation in European Parliament. As already mentioned, support by regional party structures matters in KDH and informal communication within the party structure is therefore important as well. A current member of EP⁵²⁸ pointed out in an interview that in his opinion MEPs are closer to citizens in

⁵²⁴ „KDS a OKS pôjdu do eurovolieb spoločne”, in SME daily news, 17 November 2008.

⁵²⁵ Interviews were conducted with MEP and members of party secretariat on 12 and 14 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵²⁶ The party hierarchy is the following (from below): Christian-democratic club- District centre- Regional centre-Central (Republic) bodies: Programme Conference, Vice-chairmen, Honorary Chairman, Chairman, Chairmanship, and Council, Congress. Other central organisations include headquarters, different expert committees, MPs club, control and budgetary commission. Party has also its own youth organisation- Christian-democratic youth of Slovakia. (KDH party statutes, 16 June 2007)

⁵²⁷ The Council includes these party members: national chairmanship, chairmen of regional bodies, districts representatives (1 or 2 depending on the district size), MPs, MEPs, capital mayor, chairmen of self-governing regions, chairmen of expert Christian-democratic associations, chairman and other representative of youth organisation, party secretaries from national and regional level, and financial director (KDH party statutes, 16 June 2007)

⁵²⁸ Interview was conducted on 12 January 2009 in Bratislava.

Slovakia's regions and try to communicate publicly through the media and personal appearance at every level from towns through regions to national level. But the whole Slovakia represents a single electoral district. Therefore he considers it more demanding to be visible in the regions and run a successful campaign there.

European political party and groups

Preservation of national sovereignty and member states' competencies (especially in cultural and ethical matters) is the KDH's main matter of interest in the European Union. The membership in European People's Party and European People's Party and European Democrats Group is therefore seen as instrumental. MEPs consider their gained positions of rapporteurs or work as committee chairperson as evidence that they are taken into account especially because of the EPP-ED's size and competition among MEPs. However, the party's secretariat⁵²⁹ admits no influence in questions of personnel and only suggests the possibility of picking up some parts of the program already presented by EPP for their campaign. There was only one case when Vice-president of Camera dei deputati Rocco Buttiglione from Italian party UDC, member of EPP-ED, declared that MEP Anna Záboršká should again be the number one candidate on KDH's list. Party representatives considered this statement as purely personal opinion of Mr. Buttiglione.

Strana maďarskej koalície - Magyar Koalíció Pártja (SMK - Party of Hungarian Coalition)

Strana maďarskej koalície is characterized by its strong linkage to 18 districts in southern Slovakia with ethnic Hungarian population. The party is well organized in these regions but a change in leadership in 2007 was accompanied by some disputes that have not yet been settled.

Procedure

According to the party statute, the regions and the youth association have the options to nominate candidates. If a region chooses a candidate, this one has to get approval by his/her home party organisation⁵³⁰ to be included into a group of possible candidates. In next stages the Presidency Council and Presidency discuss the nominees but the Republic Council decides about the final list. Discussion about candidates was lively even before the Republic Council's decision, because some districts proposed nominations of main party representatives, including Chairman Pál Csáky and Vice-chairman for foreign policy József Berényi. But Chairman Csáky stated before a Presidency meeting that the SMK's strategy is to nominate people who will be able to hold the position of MEPs and not only run the campaign⁵³¹. The party Presidency proposed to nominate the current MEP Edit Bauer as number one candidate again. The Rector of the Hungarian Janos Selye University in Komárno (Slovakia) was proposed as the candidate number two and the third place was reserved for a representative of youth association. The total number of candidates was higher than the actual number of seats in the EP for Slovakia, so the

⁵²⁹ Interview was conducted on 14 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵³⁰ The membership is based in local party organisation, the basic unit. The party hierarchy is following (from below): Local organisation- District organisation- Regional organisation- Presidency council- Republic bodies: Chairman, Presidency, Council, and Congress. The party includes also different expert committees, headquarter office, MPs club and youth organisation Via Nova (formally civic association) (SMK-MKP party statutes, 31 March 2007).

⁵³¹ „Poprední politici na kandidátke SMK do eurovolieb zrejme nebudú“ in SME daily news, 12 December 2008.

Republic Council also decided about eliminations. According to a party representative⁵³² the debate about candidates at the council meeting was rather stormy. The council supported the nomination of Edit Bauer as number one candidate but the other two proposals were rejected. The final list was created on the basis of this debate and as expressed in an interview some candidates did not expect to reach the final positions on the candidate list. Preferential voting has rather weak impact in election results in Slovakia⁵³³ but candidates in SMK as expressed in interview⁵³⁴ count on this option.

Criteria and informal communication

The initial set of criteria for candidates was formulated by the Republic Presidency, but according to party statutes the Republic Council is responsible for accepting these criteria. Four criteria were formulated: membership in the SMK-MKP, no record on the lists of communist secret police agents and collaborators published by the Nation's Memory Institute, knowledge of foreign language and identification with party programme and priorities. The condition of no record of secret police collaboration in the previous regime was also a criterion set for candidates in 2006 national parliamentary elections.⁵³⁵ In previous EP elections candidates did not formally have to be party members and also had to pass a test about the EU, its functions, policies etc. Language was examined only during an interview within the Presidency meeting. Already well-known candidates, MEPs or observers in the EP and MEPs' assistants do not have to pass the interview. As a party representative expressed in an interview, many candidates have some experience from individual ministries or state agencies⁵³⁶. Gender equality was proposed as a criterion for drawing up the list but because the number one candidate is female the party did not consider it as an important rule to be set. There is actually only one other female candidate on the final list.

European political party and groups

The SMK is the only party stating in its statutes its membership of the EPP-ED Group. The text is so precise because of circumstances of the party's establishment. Originally, there were three ethnic Hungarian parties in Slovakia that merged into one party because of the electoral law from 1998. Two of these parties were members of the European liberals and the other one of the EPP. Therefore, to state clearly the new party's affiliation its membership in the EPP made it into statutes around the year 2000. Next, when Slovakia joined the EU and first MEPs were elected, the SMK highlighted the new situation also in its statutes.

A member of the EP⁵³⁷ expressed that the party takes into account work within the EPP and EPP-ED but there is a rather weak impact from the European level back to national parties. European political parties should be more supportive in relation to national parties, and also with regards to personnel issues.

⁵³² Interview with secretary for foreign relations was conducted on 20 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵³³ The one and only MEP elected to EP through preferential voting was Arpád Duka-Zolomyi in 2004 who will not be a candidate in 2009 because he has not complied with the set criteria.

⁵³⁴ Interview with secretary for foreign relations was conducted on 20 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵³⁵ Interview with an MEP was conducted on 22 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵³⁶ Interview with secretary for foreign relations was conducted on 20 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵³⁷ Interview with MEP was conducted on 22 January 2009 in Bratislava.

Other Relevant Political Parties

Slovenská národná strana (Slovak National Party – SNS)

The Slovak National Party is a member of Slovakia's current governing coalition. It is a nationalist political party dominated by its leader Ján Slota. In the last elections to the European parliament in 2004 the list of candidates for the SNS led by Slota was not registered because of a long-standing dispute over the trade-mark of the SNS.⁵³⁸ However, the problem has since been resolved and the SNS stands a realistic chance of entering the EP in 2009.

Procedure

Paragraph 17 of the party' statute states that the Chairman of the party "makes final editing of the list of candidates" for members of European parliament. According to paragraph 16 of the statute the Presidency of the SNS proposes candidates for elections.

Criteria and informal communication

The party has not published its list of candidates for this year's EP elections. The leader, Ján Slota, already indicated that he would lead the list of candidates in 2009 EP elections though he has yet to decide whether he is also going to enter the EP if elected.⁵³⁹

European political party and groups

The SNS is an observer in the Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN). On 28 May 2008 Cristiana Muscardini, Chair of the UEN, visited Slovakia upon an invitation by Anna Belousovová, first Deputy Chair of the SNS. C. Muscardini expressed support for the SNS ambitions to enter the EP in 2009 and mentioned that any future SNS MEPs would be incorporated in the UEN. However, UEN plays no role in the actual selection of the SNS candidates for the EP.⁵⁴⁰

Komunistická strana Slovenska (KSS - Communist Party Slovakia)

The Communist Party of Slovakia⁵⁴¹ is the successor of the communist regime primarily in terms of ideology and personnel rather than in its institutions. The KSS drew its leadership from marginalized mid-level functionaries of the former Communist Party, adopted a program of state ownership and rejection of capitalism and European integration⁵⁴². KSS did not reach Slovakia's national parliament in the last national parliamentary elections in 2006 because of its internal disarray. The new party leadership is still critical of European integration but it is more open towards party's inclusion in European political structures.

Procedure

⁵³⁸ Instead a coalition of the Slovak National Party (SNS) and the Rigth Slovak National Party (PSNS) was registered and received 2.01 percent of the vote in 2004 EP elections. For more on the internal dispute inside the SNS see "Eurovol'by - Slotovci neboli pripravení" in www.euractiv.sk 16 April 2004

⁵³⁹ "Slota sa ešte nerozhodol, či bude europoslancom" in SITA press agency, 15 September 2008.

⁵⁴⁰ See press conference on 28 May 2008, www.sns.sk.

⁵⁴¹ Established in 1992.

⁵⁴² M. Rybář and K. Deegan-Krause: Slovakia's Communist successor parties in comparative perspective, in Communist and Post-Communist Studies 4, 2008, 497-519.

According to party statutes the Central Committee⁵⁴³ approves the candidate list. In practise, last year the Central Committee defined a set of criteria and the lower (district and regional) party organisations selected a group of candidates. Regional organisations prepared recommendations for the Presidency that drew up candidate list's proposal. The formula is organised so that all of Slovakia's 8 regions and party leadership are represented. Two candidates were also picked from the affiliated youth organisation. The Central Committee also had the possibility to nominate some candidates and as confirmed in an interview they approached personalities by asking them to become candidates⁵⁴⁴. During the Central Committee meeting in January 2009 a discussion about an alternative number one candidate for EP elections arose. The intention was to nominate someone who was more familiar with the KSS than the proposed candidate, who is publicly not well known even in comparison with second proposed candidate. On the other hand, after the party's failure in the last national elections in 2006 when the KSS did not pass the 5% threshold for getting into the parliament, a consensus on setting a new strategy and performing was set. In this sense the party Chairman confirmed the party strategy to come up with new faces that was already applied for the presidential elections preceding the EP elections⁵⁴⁵.

Criteria and informal communication

The main focus during selection of candidates was aimed at professional expertise. Other criteria included knowledge of foreign languages and leftist thinking. Party membership was not a necessity for becoming a candidate but the leftist orientation was an important condition. The party also considered personalities from regions that share a leftist reputation or are well-known even in media. The language skills were not proved by any interview or a test. Party Presidency assumed that regions have already chosen qualified candidates. Representation of gender and individual age categories were taken into account during the preparation of a candidate list. According to the party Chairman⁵⁴⁶ it is also a part of the party's strategy to come up with new candidates and to cultivate informal communication towards the base of the party's membership.

European political party and groups

The KSS is an affiliated member of the European Left and although the party is not represented in the EP, the KSS thanks to its cooperation with the Czech communists takes part in conferences and some activities of the Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left. The party confirmed that if they enter the EP, their MEPs will be included in the GEU-NGL group⁵⁴⁷. Therefore nowadays there is not really an evident impact of the European party and group on the KSS.

Slobodné forum (SF - Free Forum)

Slobodné fórum is a party built around the chairwoman Zuzana Martináková. It was established in 2004 when she and others at that time, like the prominent MP Ivan Šimko, left the SDKÚ-DS. Currently the SF is outside the national parliament.

⁵⁴³ The party hierarchy is following (from below): Basic (local) organisation- District organisation- Regional organisation- Republic level: Central Committee- Presidency and Secretariat; Party Congress. (KSS party statutes, September 6-7, 2008)

⁵⁴⁴ Interview with the party chairman was conducted on 27 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵⁴⁵ Interview was conducted on 27 January 2009 in Bratislava.

⁵⁴⁶ dto.

⁵⁴⁷ dto.

Procedure

Slobodné forum has not yet formed the candidate list for its EP elections but the procedure is similar to the nomination of candidates in national elections. Regional organisations⁵⁴⁸ propose individual candidates according to recommendations from district and local organizations. In the next step the regional bodies submit their proposals to the Presidency that draws up the first candidate list. During the Presidency meeting each regional representative introduces the proposed candidate and justifies this decision to party members. The Presidency also has the right to nominate some other candidates. Representative of affiliated youth organisation Slobodné Fórum Mladých is always present at presidency meetings and has confirmed in communication with party vice-chairwomen⁵⁴⁹ they have the possibility to come up with own candidate's proposal. The Chairwoman has the right to present her opinion on every candidate⁵⁵⁰ during presidency meeting but the list is created collectively. The list is then submitted by the party chair to the Republic Council⁵⁵¹ that can, based on discussion, change the candidates' order. The final voting confirms the whole list of candidates. None of the candidates is elected to the list individually.

Criteria and informal communication

Knowledge of a foreign language is an essential criterion for the SF. Further emphasis is put on expertise, personal charisma and candidate's public acceptance in the region. Informal communication is very important in the SF because candidates have to represent themselves, their work and future plans to party members and structures. As expressed by the party vice-chairman⁵⁵² the importance is placed on the candidate's respectability and efforts to work in citizens' favour. As a small and young party, the SF still looks for people but at the same time is struggling to avoid one-time candidates, especially when choosing unknown people from regions.

European political party and groups

Slobodné forum has started the integration into the European liberals but it is not an official member yet. Therefore the impact of European political parties or groups cannot be observed so far.

Aliancia Nového občana (The Alliance of a New Citizen – ANO)

The Alliance of a New Citizen was a party created by its Chairman Pavol Rusko in 2001. The party entered Slovakia's parliament in 2002 but failed to pass the threshold for the European parliament in the 2004 elections. Pavol Rusko left the party as its Chair in 2007. It has since become a politically irrelevant force in Slovakia.

Procedure

⁵⁴⁸ The party hierarchy is following (from below): Local organisation- District organisation- Regional organisation- Republic bodies: Programme council, Presidency (includes Chairperson and Vice-chairs, General Manager), Council, Congress. Under the Presidency there operates the Executive Committee and Party Office. (SF party statutes, September 22, 2007)

⁵⁴⁹ Additional information was provided by the party vice-chairwoman per email on 30 January 2009.

⁵⁵⁰ Additional information was provided by the party vice-chairwoman per email on 30 January 2009.

⁵⁵¹ Members of Republic Council currently include the Presidency members and representatives of all districts. (SF party statutes, September 22, 2007)

⁵⁵² Interview with the party vice-chairwoman was conducted on 28 January 2009.

Although ANO is practically a non-existent political force in 2009, in 2004 it experienced probably the most open struggle for the position of a leader on the list of candidates. The frontrunner for the position and a member of Slovakia's parliament from 2002 to 2006 Jozef Banáš eventually had to give up his ambition as a consequence of media reports that pointed to his alleged collaboration with the communist secret policy in former Czechoslovakia.⁵⁵³

Criteria and informal communication

ANO was initially looking for candidates with international experience and solid language skills. However, with the struggle for leadership on the list of candidates for EP election, past cooperation with the communist secret policy became the defining criterion that sidelined Jozef Banáš from his ambitions to lead the ANO in 2004 EP elections.

European political party and groups

ANO has been a member of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR).

Conclusions

The selection of candidates for the most relevant positions on the party list (1-3) is centralized on national level. Regional bodies in political parties also nominate candidates but these are relevant only in the case of SDKÚ-DS because of its system of primaries in selecting the party's candidates for the European parliament. Generally, candidates selected by regional structures of political parties end up on unelectable positions on party lists. Parties present in the European Parliament decided to nominate their current MEPs again because of their experience and established contacts.

Young candidates (age category 30-35 or younger) reached lower positions on candidate lists. Parties rely on strategy of upbringing a new generation of future MEPs whereby young candidates should gain experience by joining the election campaign. Gender was declared by several party representatives as an important criterion, but especially because of an open order of candidates on many individual party lists only the final lists registered at the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic before elections may prove those claims.

Informal communication has been declared important in every party. However, the party structures suggests that it is more significant in parties with stronger and well-established local, district and regional structures also represented at the national level (for example SMK and KDH).

Setting the order on the candidate list by a party is the crucial issue. Slovakia allows preferential voting for individual candidates on a party list but in 2004 EP elections it had a weak impact when preferential votes helped only one candidate in one political party (SMK).

Cooperation within European political parties and groups is considered as important and it works in favour of nominating the current MEPs for EP elections in 2009. However the practical relevance of European political parties and groups in the selection process of candidates is rather limited.

⁵⁵³ See "Európske voľby v tieni prezidentských" in www.euractiv.sk, 3 March 2004

Tables

Elections to National Council of the Slovak Parliament in 2006

	Political party	Number of valid votes cast	Share of valid votes cast in %
	Ľavicový blok	9 174	0,39
	Strana občianskej solidarity	2 498	0,10
	Misia 21 - Nová kresťanská demokracia	2 523	0,10
	Strana demokratickej ľavice	2 906	0,12
	Združenie robotníkov Slovenska	6 864	0,29
NR SR	Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie	191 443	8,31
	Slovenská národná koalícia - Slovenská vzájomnosť	4 016	0,17
	Aliancia nového občana	32 775	1,42
	Hnutie za demokraciu	14 728	0,63
NR SR	Strana maďarskej koalície - Magyar Koalíció Pártja	269 111	11,68
	Slobodné fórum	79 963	3,47
	Občianska konzervatívna strana	6 262	0,27
	Prosperita Slovenska	3 118	0,13
NR SR	Ľudová strana - Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko	202 540	8,79
	Agrárna strana vidieka	3 160	0,13
	Komunistická strana Slovenska	89 418	3,88
	Slovenská ľudová strana	3 815	0,16
NR SR	Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia - Demokratická strana	422 815	18,35
NR SR	SMER - sociálna demokracia	671 185	29,14
NR SR	Slovenská národná strana	270 230	11,73
	NÁDEJ	14 595	0,63

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, June 2006

Note: The political parties highlighted in green entered the National Council of the SR

Elections to the European Parliament in 2004

Political party			Number of valid votes	Share of valid votes
EP	1	Strana maďarskej koalície - Magyar Koalíció Pártja	92 927	13,24
	2	Aliancia nového občana	32 653	4,65
EP	3	Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia	119 954	17,09
	4	Maďarská federalistická strana	1 598	0,22
	5	Živnostenská strana Slovenskej republiky	2 464	0,35
	6	Demokratická únia Slovenska	1 354	0,19
	7	Komunistická strana Slovenska	31 908	4,54
	8	Slobodné fórum	22 804	3,25
	9	Koalícia Slovenská národná strana, Pravá Slovenská národná strana	14 150	2,01
	10	Slovenská ľudová strana	1 241	0,17
	11	AKTÍVNE ŽENY - OS Slovenska	4 940	0,70
EP	12	SMER (tretia cesta)	118 535	16,89
EP	13	Ľudová strana - Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko	119 582	17,04
EP	14	Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie	113 655	16,19
	15	Koalícia Hnutie za demokraciu, Ľudová únia	11 914	1,69
	16	Občianska konzervatívna strana	7 060	1,00
	17	Rómske kresťanské demokratické hnutie v Slovenskej republike	4 856	0,69

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2004

Note: The political parties highlighted in green entered the European Parliament

Elections to National Council of the Slovak Parliament in 2002

Political party			Number of valid votes	Share of valid votes
	1	Strana zelených na Slovensku	28 365	0,98
NR SR	2	Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia	433 953	15,09
	3	Strana za demokratické práva občanov	6 716	0,23
	4	Strana demokratickej ľavice	39 163	1,36
NR SR	5	SMER	387 100	13,46
NR SR	6	Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko	560 691	19,50
	7	Občianska konzervatívna strana	9 422	0,32
	8	Hnutie za demokraciu	94 324	3,28
	9	Politické hnutie Rómov na Slovensku - ROMA	6 234	0,21
NR SR	10	Komunistická strana Slovenska	181 872	6,32
NR SR	11	Strana maďarskej koalície - Magyar Koalíció Pártja	321 069	11,16
NR SR	12	Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie	237 202	8,25
	14	Ľudová strana	763	0,02
	15	Združenie robotníkov Slovenska	15 755	0,54
	16	Ľavicový blok	6 441	0,22
NR SR	17	Aliancia nového občana	230 309	8,01
	18	Béčko - Revolučná robotnícka strana	2 818	0,09
	19	Žena a rodina	12 646	0,43
	20	Sociálnodemokratická alternatíva	51 649	1,79
	21	Slovenská národná jednota	4 548	0,15
	22	Nezávislá občianska strana nezamestnaných a poškodených	26 205	0,91
	23	Slovenská národná strana	95 633	3,32
	24	Robotnícka strana ROSA	8 699	0,30
	25	Rómska občianska iniciatíva SR	8 420	0,29
	26	Prává Slovenská národná strana	105 084	3,65

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Note: The political parties highlighted in green entered the National Council of the SR

List of Abbreviations

ALDE	Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
ANO	Aliancia nového občana / Alliance of a New Citizen
EPP-ED	Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats
GUE/NGL	Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left
IDEM	Independence/Democracy Group
KDH	Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie/ Christian Democratic Movement
KDS	Konzervatívni demokrati Slovenska/ Conservative Democrats of Slovakia
KSS	Komunistická strana Slovenska / Communist Party Slovakia
ĽS-HZDS	Ľudová strana- Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko/ People's Party- Movement for Democratic Slovakia)
OKS	Občiansko-konzervatívna strana/ Civic-Conservative Party
PES	Socialist Group in the European Parliament

SDKÚ-DS	Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia- Demokratická strana/ Slovak Democratic and Christian Union-Democratic Party
SF	Slobodné forum/ Free Forum
SMER-SD	Smer- sociálna demokracia / Direction- Social Democracy
SMK-MKP	Strana maďarskej koalície- Magyar Koalíció Pártja/ Party of Hungarian Coalition
SNS	Slovenská národná strana/ Slovak National Party
UDC	Unione dei Democratici Cristiani e di Centro/ Union of Christian and Centre Democrats

FINLAND

Introduction

We have approached the registered political parties in Finland with a brief set of questions regarding the candidate selection process. More specifically, we sent an email to the party secretaries of all registered parties and requested brief responses to the following questions:

- How are the candidates of party being determined? In other words, who has the right to propose candidates?
- Which party organ selects the candidates?
- Is there an over or undersupply of candidates for the European elections?
- Is your party actively seeking candidates in specific societal positions?

The questions were addressed to the party secretaries, but we added a note suggesting that the secretaries should feel free to delegate the responses to other party personnel, e.g. the persons responsible for organizing the EP elections.

As mentioned above, all registered parties were approached. Once registered, a party will remain in the official registry until such event that it has received no parliamentary seats in two consecutive parliamentary elections. The registered parties of Finland are listed in the following in the order of the number of seats they received in the last parliamentary election of 2007: Finnish Center Party (KESK), National Coalition Party (KOK), Social Democratic Party (SDP), Left Alliance (VAS), Greens (VIHR), Christian Democratic Party (KD), Swedish People's Party (RKP) and the Real Finns Party (PS). These parties received seats. In addition the following parties are listed in the official registry: Finnish Labor Party (STP), Seniors' Party (SP), Finnish Communist Party (SKP), Communist Labor Party -- for Peace and Socialism (KTP), Independence Party (IPU) and For the Poor People (KA). All 6 last mentioned parties were registered after the 2003 parliamentary election. None of them gained representation in the 2007 parliamentary election.

The national party affiliation of Finnish MEPs

The national parties whose candidates have been elected to the European Parliament are indicated in Table 1.

Party	1995	1996	1999	2004
KOK	4	4	4	4
KESK	5	4	4	4
SDP	4	4	3	3
VIHR	1	1	2	1
VAS	1	2	1	1
RKP	1	1	1	1
KD	0	0	1	0
	16	16	16	14

Table 1. The Number of MEP's Sent by Finnish Parties

Clearly the three largest Finnish parties have the largest representation in the EP. There has been a small variation in the number of MEP's sent by various parties over the short history of the Finnish EU-membership. It should be pointed out that in the first year of Finnish membership, the Finnish MEP's were elected by the parliament in anticipation of the 1996 European election.

Despite the decrease in the overall Finnish representation, the three largest Finnish parties have largely been able to maintain their level of representation. Of these three, KESK and SDP have lost one seat each from their maximal amount of seats. KOK and RKP have maintained their seat number throughout the Finnish EP period.

The 2004 European election results in Finland

The 2004 EP election results are summarized in Table 2 which indicates the personal votes of the elected candidates and the party vote totals as well as the corresponding percentages. Only those parties with more than 2 % of total votes are indicated.

KOK	392771	23.7
Stubb, Alexander	115224	7.0
Itälä, Ville	65439	4.0
Kauppi, Piaa-Noora	62995	3.8
Korhola, Eija-Riitta	35285	2.1
KESK	387217	23.3
Jääteenmäki, Anneli	149646	9.0
Virrankoski, Kyösti	51415	3.1
Väyrynen, Paavo	44123	2.7
Takkula, Hannu	32739	2.0
SDP	350525	21.2
Paasilinna, Reino	64305	3.9
Myller, Riitta	55133	3.3
Lehtinen, Lasse	47186	2.8
VIHR	172844	10.4
Hassi, Satu	74714	4.5
VAS	151291	9.1
Seppänen, Esko	72401	4.4
RKP	94421	5.7
Lax, Henrik	32707	2.0
KD	70845	4.3

Source: <http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/euvaa/2004>

Table 2. Elected Finnish MEP's in 2004. Source: Statistics Finland,

As in the national parliamentary elections, the three largest parties clearly dominate the Finnish EP elections. Overall the vote shares of the parties differ from those of the national parliamentary election of 2003 in that in the latter election KESK was the largest and KOK the third largest party. Also VAS did better than VIHR in the 2003 parliamentary election.

The vast variation of personal votes is evident in Table 2. Anneli Jäätteenmäki received 9 % of the total votes; this was 4.5 times the number of votes received by Henrik Lax. Jäätteenmäki's vote share was nearly 40% of KESK's total votes.⁵⁵⁴ Assuming that no major changes in party support take place in the 2009 EP election, RKP is likely to lose its representation in the EP. Much, however, depends on the candidate mix of parties as well as the degree to which various parties are able to mobilize the supporters.

The upcoming EP election will see relatively few MEP's stand up as candidates for the next EP. For example, all three of SDP's MEP's have declined from running. Also VAS's and RKP's only MEP's, Esko Seppänen and Henrik Lax, respectively, will not run for EP. Also some MEP's from other parties are likely not to show up on the candidate lists in the next EP election.

The Finnish electoral system

The principle of proportionality permeates the Finnish electoral system. There are two non-equivalent formulae for proportionality in use in Finnish elections:

1. the formula for apportioning the parliamentary seats to electoral districts, and
2. the formula used in assigning parliamentary seats to parties or electoral alliances once the votes have been cast.

The former formula is known as the largest remainders (a.k.a. Hamilton's formula) one, while the latter is the method suggested - independently, it seems - by d'Hondt and Jefferson (Balinski and Young 1982). In the Finnish EP elections, there is no apportionment since the entire country is considered as one electoral district.

The votes are cast for individual candidates in (open) party lists. Each voter can vote for one and only one candidate. The number of candidates that any given party or alliance gets is determined on the basis of the total number of votes given to the candidates of that party or alliance. Each candidate is given a comparison number. The largest vote-getter⁵⁵⁵ in each list gets the comparison number which equals the total number of votes given to the candidates on that list. The second largest vote-getter is given the comparison number equalling the total list votes divided by two, the third largest gets the comparison number equalling the list vote total divided by three, etc. This way every candidate can be given a comparison number. If k candidates are to be elected, the candidates with k largest comparison numbers are declared elected.

Thus, the priority of candidates on each list with respect to each other is determined on the basis of the personal votes: the larger the number of votes given to a candidate on the list, the higher

⁵⁵⁴ Jäätteenmäki's strong support is at least partly explainable by the dramatic events before and after the 2003 parliamentary election from which she emerged as the winner and prime minister - the first female PM in the history of Finland - only to be forced to leave the office a few weeks later after a scandalous information leaked from the office of the President of Finland which was taken advantage of by Jäätteenmäki in the election campaign. She maintained that the information was not solicited by her, but her parliamentary support evaporated in the process. Many people felt sorry for her and this may have given an additional boost to her support in the EP election. See e.g. Nurmi and Nurmi 2004.

⁵⁵⁵ Please note - "vote-getter" is not really proper English. It would be better to say something like "the candidate with the largest number of votes" or similar.

he/she is in the ranking of the candidates on that list. The priority is in a sense open, i.e. determined by the voters. However, the list vote total determines the number of candidates elected from any list.

While there are 15 electoral districts in the Finnish parliamentary elections, there is only one in the EP elections. This is obviously a very significant factor in determining the electoral outcome. On the one hand, one of the main sources of disproportionality in Finnish parliamentary elections is the existence of multiple districts combined with the principle that no vote transfers are made between districts. This source of ``bias'' is absent in the Finnish EP elections. On the other hand, the one-district system makes it impossible to guarantee any degree of geographical representation. The system strongly favours candidates with national visibility. It also makes the campaigning relatively costly.

The parties and their European affiliations

The organization of Finnish parties

The historical background of Finnish parties varies a great deal. Some have emerged in response to fundamental societal cleavages, such as parties representing primarily employee interests: SDP and VAS. Similarly, KOK's stronghold has always been in the camp of employers and entrepreneurs. Many conservative intellectuals have also been members of the party. KESK is a direct successor of agrarian party. On the other hand, RKP has been a predominantly language-related party with the main aim in securing and strengthening the rights of the Swedish speaking minority in Finland. The origins of these parties go back some 90-100 years. In addition to these there are two parties founded about 50 years ago:

KD and PS. KD's main preoccupation is with the traditional family and Christian values. PS has roots in the Finnish small-farmer population in the countryside where it represented a counter-force to KESK's strong position. In its present incarnation the party has made inroads to urban centers, especially in southern Finland. A much younger party, VIHR, has a background in environmental movement.

Despite differences in backgrounds, the parties have rather similar organizational charts (Sundberg and Gylling 1992). The basic units are typically municipal organizations. These may be subdivided into branches. Above the municipal organizations are the districts ones. One would expect to find 14 of them in each party since there are 14 districts in mainland Finland. However, their number ranges from 5 to 21.⁵⁵⁶ Their existence results naturally from the Finnish parliamentary election system which effectively treats each district as a separate unit, i.e. no vote transfers from one to another are allowed nor are there any compensation seats allocated on the basis of country-wide support. Hence, each district conducts its own election independently of the others.

The central party level then consists of the party convention (or congress), party executive, executive committee and party office. The first one is the highest decision making body of the party. It, however, convenes very infrequently and due to its size, is not an efficient instrument

⁵⁵⁶ The 15th district of the island province Åland differs from the mainland ones in being a single-member one in national parliamentary elections. It has also a somewhat different party system than the mainland districts. In the EP elections it is a part of the single district of Finland.

in party policy formation. It takes a stand on programmatic documents, elects the leader and so on. The party executive handles issues of strategy and policy formation. Its workhorse is the executive committee which convenes rather frequently to deal with issues of tactics. The party office, finally, takes care of the day-to-day running of the party affairs. Its main actors are the party leader and secretary.

The European affiliations

The Finnish party system is currently characterized by three major (KOK, KESK, SDP), two medium-sized (VIHR, VAS) and three small parties (RKP, KD, PS). Two unique features of the Finnish system are the absence of a liberal party and the strong role of the former agrarian party, KESK.

Most Finnish MEPs are members of some European party. All of them belong to a European Parliamentary Group. The affiliations of the Finnish parties are the following (Raunio 2008):

Party	European party	EP group
SDP	European Socialist Party (ESP)	ESP
KESK	European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR)	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)
KOK	European People's Party (EPP)	European People's Party (EPP) /European Democrats (EPP-ED)
VAS		European United Left/Nordic Green Left (EUL/NGL)
VIHR	European Green Party	Greens /European Free Alliance (G/EFA)
RKP	European Liberal and Democratic Parties (ELDR)	Union of European Liberal Democrats (ALDE)

Table 3: The affiliations of Finnish MEP's in the EP

All Finnish parties, except VAS, are thus, affiliated not only with a EP parliamentary grouping, but also with a European party. With the exception of KESK and RKP, the mapping from national parties to European party groupings has so far been one-to-one. This suggests a similarity in the basic underlying policy dimension of the parties on both levels of aggregation.

On the basis of survey data, Mattila and Raunio (2005) have identified two primary policy dimensions in Finnish politics:

1. the traditional left-right dimension, and
2. the attitude towards European integration

On the former the voters place the parties into order VAS-SDP-VIHR-PS-KD-KESK-RKP-KOK. On the European integration dimension the order is (from least to most favourable attitude): PS-VAS-KD-VIHR-KESK-RKP-SDP-KOK. On the former dimension the voters' perceptions regarding the position of PS, KD, KESK and RKP are very close to one another and the same is true of VIHR, KD and KESK on the integration dimension.

One striking observation about the Finnish parties and their European affiliations is that the European party or party grouping has in the previous elections played absolutely no role in the national campaigning. Very few voters are aware of the existence of the European parties, let

alone the association of their candidate to those groupings. Whether the European parties will take a more prominent role in the future remains to be seen, but given the wide-spread Euroscepticism among the Finnish electorate, the national parties may find it counterproductive to emphasize their European linkages. At the moment it is also difficult to see what the European parties could contribute to the Finnish EP election campaign.

The candidate selection process

Although the political parties are by far the most important actors in the candidate nomination process, they are acting within a legal framework that sets the stage for electoral competition. We shall briefly touch upon this framework before turning to the responses of the parties to our questionnaire.

The statutory background: legislation and bylaws

There two types of actors that have the right to nominate candidates for European elections: (i) the parties, and (ii) the voters who have formed an electoral association (*valitsijayhdistys*). Both actors have the right to form electoral alliances. The candidates are nominated for the entire country.

For the establishment of an electoral association, 2000 legitimate voters are needed. They sign a document in which they indicate their support for a candidate. No voter can be a member of more than one electoral association.

Each party, association or alliance may nominate at most 20 candidates. No individual may be a candidate in more than one country of the EU. No individual may be a candidate of more than one party of association. Of the candidate nomination process in parties the Election Act states that the candidates are to be nominated in a way - specified in the bylaws of the party in detail - that guarantees the democratic rights of the party members. Thus, the law refers to the party bylaws for detailed regulation of the nomination process.

The intra-party process in candidate nomination varies somewhat. The law states that the basic units (*perusosastot*) and intra-party electoral associations may propose candidates to be included in the party's list of candidates. The intra-party associations are groups consisting either of at least 10 members of the same basic unit or or at least 30 members from different basic units. When the candidate nomination process includes voting, each party member is to have the right to vote. The confirmation of the list of a party's candidates is done by the district organization (*piirijärjestö*). This body has the right to change at most 1/4 of the candidates nominated by the members' vote, if there is one (Kuitunen 2008).

The law pertains primarily to national parliamentary elections, but is applicable mutatis mutandis also in the European elections. Since in these elections there is only one district, the role of district organizations is assumed by the highest organs of the party, party council (*puoluevaltuuskunta*) or party executive (*puoluehallitus*).

The responses

How are the candidates determined?

Our first question pertains to the process whereby individuals can be proposed as candidates in the election. KOK's response is that any individual may volunteer to become a candidate. In addition, the party itself through its district and local organizations actively seeks suitable candidates. KOK's response emphasizes the special nature of EP elections: the whole country forms one district and the maximum number of candidates is 20. Hence, the party strives at a candidate list that is maximally balanced with respect to age, occupation and gender. The candidates who are widely known by the general public are naturally in an advantaged position in the electoral campaign, but those kinds of candidates are not specifically sought for.

KESK replies that each basic organizational unit (perusjärjestö) of the party has the right to propose candidates. Also an electoral association consisting of at least 30 party members can propose candidates. Each basic organizational unit and association may propose no more than one candidate. The district council (piiritoimikunta) may propose also persons that have not been proposed by basic units or associations. The youth and student associations of KESK may together propose at most 5 candidates to the party executive (puoluehallitus). The women's association of KESK can also propose at most 5 candidates to the executive. The executive then prepares a candidate list proposal for the party council (puoluevaltuuskunta). The list is built so as to balance geographical, gender and age considerations. The executive proposal may contain new names - i.e. those not proposed by other party bodies mentioned above - but their number may not exceed 1/4 of the total number of candidates.

SDP has recently - in the summer of 2008 - changed its bylaws so that now the party executive - possibly upon having received candidate proposals from the district organizations - makes the proposal for candidate list to the party council. Formally, it has not been decided which party organs may propose candidates, but in practice the candidate selection is done in cooperation between party executive and district organizations. The party has established a small core group to coordinate the candidate search and selection process. The party leader and the party secretary have significant roles in the process.

In VIHR proposals for candidates can made by districts, local party organizations and e.g. MP's. A largely similar procedure is being applied by VAS: all party organs (local organizations, municipal associations, youth and women's organizations) may propose candidates to the party executive within a specific time period. RKP has delegated the candidate search to a working group which proposes candidates. In KD all party members can in principle propose candidates. Members may also propose themselves. The party bylaws state that before candidate nominations, all districts are to be heard. In practice the districts recommend one or several candidates to the nomination body, party council.

PS has never had a representative in EP. PS's procedure is that the district or local associations may propose candidates to the nominating body. STP, also without EP representation in previous EP (and national parliamentary) elections, resorts to a procedure whereby the members of the party executive or active party members may propose candidates.

Which party organ nominates the candidates?

KOK's nomination process ends with the decision of the party council upon the proposal of the party executive. The council may also delegate the nomination power to the executive. This is also basically the case also in KESK and SDP. In VIHR it is the party executive that nominates the candidates. In VAS the party council nominated 12 candidates and delegated to the party executive the right to nominate the remaining 8 candidates. All 20 will be confirmed by the party council in the spring of 2009. The party executive then finally makes the nomination decision. In RKP the nominations are made by the party executive.

In KD the nomination decision has been delegated by the party council to the executive. The hearing of the districts is assumed. In the districts the candidate issue is dealt with by the district executive or district meeting. In PS the party executive decides the candidates. This procedure is also applied in STP.

Is there an abundance or shortage candidate proposals?

As was to be expected, no party indicated that there is a shortage of candidate proposals. Perhaps the wording of the question was in that regard somewhat unfortunate. However, upon closer inspection some differences in emphasis become visible. KOK's response contains a concern for guaranteeing a balanced and equitable list. KOK also indicates that the anticipated campaign costs and the challenges implied by the nation-wide contest effectively restrict the over-supply of candidates. KESK just points out that enough candidates have been available. SDP observes that there are some shortage of candidates with strong regional appeal, but overall there are enough candidates. Candidates in the shortest supply are in the areas outside the southern and western districts. VIHR's response expresses concern over the over-supply of candidates which implies that difficult choices have to be made in the nomination process. VAS observes that more male than female candidate proposals are being made. Then goal is set at having 10 female and 10 male candidates. In the light of this goal VAS anticipates an over-supply of male candidates. Also KD mentions the major financial commitment that the candidates have to undertake and sees the problem of candidate supply of a rather qualitative than quantitative nature. PS has experienced no shortage of candidates. STP, in turn, is not able to give an opinion at this stage.

Are candidates in specific positions being targeted?

KOK's aim is to build a maximally balanced slate from the occupational, regional, gender and age point of view. Almost identical is the target-setting of KESK. SDP is somewhat more specific. The list should contain weighty national and regional opinion leaders, e.g. MP's, MP candidates, previous MEP candidates. Also experts (scholars) and people with particular influence on certain population groupings (cultural activists, immigrants etc.) are being sought. Some widely known celebrities have also been discussed with. In general, however, a necessary condition for inclusion in SDP's list is party membership.

According to VIHR's response the candidates have to be involved in the socio-political debates or activities. They must also subscribe to the general goal of VIHR. VAS looks for candidates that together cover all regions of the country. There should be equally many male and female

candidates. Moreover, the candidates should have varied backgrounds in terms of expertise in European affairs, occupation, MP experience, global issues, and in specific areas of knowledge.

RKP looks for candidates with varied backgrounds, positions and target groups. KD does not target any particular positions, but emphasizes that the candidates share the party's general values and goals. PS also eschews from targeting individuals with specific occupational or social positions. The selection is made from individuals that have been put forward. STP aims to obtain at regional, social and gender equality in its candidate slate.

Table 4 summarizes the candidate selection process of the major Finnish parties in parliamentary, municipal, presidential and EP elections.

Election:	parliamentary	municipal	presidential	EP
KOK	membership vote in districts	regional or municipal association	party convention	party council
KESK	as above	as above	as above	as above
SDP	as above	as above	consultative members' vote	as above
VIHR	as above	as above	party council	as above
VAS	as above	as above	party council preceded by members' vote	as above
RKP	as above	as above	party convention	party executive
KD	as above	as above	party convention	party council
PS	as above	as above		party executive

Table 4. Summary of nomination procedures

There is very little variation in the procedures mainly because of the relatively detailed guidelines stemming from party legislation. The crucial party body in the nomination process tends to be the party council which plays the role analogous to that of parliament in a party's internal affairs. Hence, its decisions can, *ipso facto*, be regarded as guaranteeing the democratic rights of the party members.

In several party responses it was indicated that the aim is to put together a balanced candidate list, i.e. a list containing candidates from various regions of the country, representing roughly equally both sexes equally, and having candidates from several age groups. One would perhaps expect that achieving this would best succeed if the entire list were decided simultaneously. This view is apparently not shared by the parties. At the time of this writing (January 24, 2009), none of the parties has publicized its entire candidate slate. Instead, partial lists have been made public (Turun Sanomat, January 24, 8). VAS has made most progress in its candidate nominations: it has nominated 14 out of total 20 candidates. KESK has nominated 11, SDP 7, RKP 3. On January 24, 2009, KOK nominated 10 out of its 20 MEP candidates. These include three current members of the EP: Ville Itälä, Eija-Riitta Korhola and Sirpa Pietikäinen (who replaced Alexander Stubb in the present EP upon the latter's nomination to the post of minister of foreign affairs in Finland).

Concluding remarks

The EP elections in Finland - as in many other EU member states - have been characterized by very low voter turnout. Apparently the role of the EP has not been deemed important by the Finnish voters.

The growing importance of the EP in the EU decision making process has not been noticed by the Finnish electorate. Among MP's and other members of the political elite, the prestige of EP is, however, pretty high. The parties tend to nominate high ranking, experienced politicians to their lists for EP elections. By the same token, many politicians of high status in Finland are likely to accept the invitation of their party to join the candidate list. Many MEP's are quite willing to run in several EP elections. So there is a strange discrepancy between the popular view of the importance of an institution and that of the persons who should have some insider information about it.⁵⁵⁷

The electoral campaign in the context of EP elections differs considerably from the national parliamentary elections. The main source of difference is the fact that the country forms a single electoral district. This - together with the open list system of proportional representation - has made it inevitable that only people who have been brought to the nation-wide public awareness have realistic chances of getting elected. Thus, the parties are looking for candidates with high visibility either in politics or other areas. Most sitting parliamentarians are, of course, widely known and thus potential MEP candidates. Yet, the parties are anxious to get nationally known entertainers, intellectuals, sports stars and other celebrities on their list to garner votes for the party.

Another implication of the single electoral district is the relatively high campaign expenditure. The candidates necessarily need to invest large sums of their own funds for campaigning. Moreover, people with high visibility are more likely to receive campaign funding from other sources than their own or their party's.

There has occasionally been some debate on whether there should be three or four electoral districts to guarantee a reasonable degree of regional representation and to cut down the individual campaigning costs, but thus far no reform proposal has been submitted to the parliament. The system is therefore likely to remain the same - i.e. a single-district one - for the foreseeable future. If the turnout remains embarrassingly low in the upcoming elections, voices are likely to be raised to modify the system. No electoral system reform will, however, attract people to the polls unless they are convinced that the body they are helping to put together has some real power. Despite the EU decision making reforms over the past decade, it is still pretty clear that it is the Commission and the Council of Ministers (each in their different ways) that are calling the shots in the EU (see Napel and Widgrén 2006).

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⁵⁵⁷ A cynic (or realist) could argue that there is a pretty straight-forward explanation to the discrepancy: the material benefits of the MEP's. These, of course, do not accrue to the voters.

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SWEDEN

Introduction

The 2009 election will be the fourth time that Swedish citizens get to go to the ballot booth and elect their representatives to the European Parliament (EP). However, the selection of candidates starts at a much earlier stage and the purpose of this study is to describe and analyse the process whereby the Swedish candidates were selected in the national party organisations. The study includes all the Swedish parties that are currently represented in the EP and that present candidates for the 2009 election. That is, the Moderates, Liberals, Christian Democrats, Centre Party, June List, Greens, Social Democrats and the Left Party.

The empirical materials used for the study are party statutes, documented decisions or other written rules. This is complemented with interviews with party representatives that were involved in the process. Finally, media reports have been used to verify the debate about the process.

The arrangement of the paper is as follows. The introduction is followed by a description of the institutional and political context that surrounds the selection process, i.e. the electoral system, party system and the debate on the EU. Thereafter, the selection process within each of the selected party organisations is in focus. We analyse the formal regulations that influence the process and how the process evolved in practice. The last section presents the overall conclusions of the study.

The institutional and political context

The process of selecting candidates for public positions is a combination of system specific characteristics (e.g. electoral laws etc.) and intra-party regulations and procedures. The second depends to a great deal on the first. This means that you have to look at both these levels in order to comprehend the process of selecting candidates. In this section, we will look at the Swedish electoral system, party system and the parties' view on EU-issues.

The electoral system

From a voter's perspective, the candidates are presented to you in some kind of electoral procedure, usually a list of candidates (at least in a European perspective). Then, the electoral system gives you the possibility to choose among these candidates at the ballot box. Different electoral system gives you more or less freedom in this respect (Norris 1997; Farrell 2001). Simplified, if your choice is very constrained (for example limited to a fixed list), the power to select candidates is more or less exclusively in the hands of the party organisations. Consequently, if you are able to select among different candidates (within the same party or between various parties) your influence over the process is enhanced.

In Sweden, there is a strong tradition of party-based electoral system. However, in the 1998 election, a system with preferential voting was introduced. Candidates need 8% (national) or 5% (EP) of the votes for the party in the electoral district in order to alter the ranking of the list. In the

2006 national election, 22% of the electorate used the preferential vote. This meant that 57 of 349 representatives (16%) were elected with the preferential vote and six of these (1.7%) would not have been elected otherwise (Valmyndigheten 2009b). The effect of the preferential vote was even greater in the 2004 EP election, where 59% of the electorate used the preferential vote. This meant that 15 of the 19 MEPs (78%) were elected with the preferential vote, and four of these (21%) would not have been elected otherwise (Valmyndigheten 2009a). This suggests at least two things: first, that the role of the candidate is more important in the EP elections and, second, that parties are less in tune with the voters when it comes to EP elections, compared to national elections.

Furthermore, the Swedish electoral system (to the national parliament) is regarded as highly proportional, and this is underlined by the use of a two-tier procedure. The lower tier consists of 29 constituencies covering the country, which between them return 310 deputies. The remaining 39 seats are held back for allocation at the second tier with the purpose of ensuring that the total number of seats received by each party comes as close to its proportional share as possible. In the European election, however, the whole country is one constituency. The effect is that parties present one list for the entire country. Some parties have tried to divide the country into 'districts' and thereby presented several lists, but with the same top candidates, in order to create a more regional connection. However, the overall effect of these measures is regarded as very limited. The EP election is a national event inside as well as outside the party organisations.

The party system

Ever since the debate on membership to the European Union (EU) surfaced in the Swedish debate, the conflict between Eurosceptics and EU-advocates has been quite profound. Even though the tension has reduced during the last years, the attitude towards the EU is still an important cleavage in the Swedish political landscape. At the same time, the established party system has roughly been preserved (the exception is the start of the June List which we will return to), although most parties have had more or less severe conflicts surrounding the EU-issue. The established party system contains of seven parties (once again leaving the June List outside), best described along a left-right continuum. Historically, the stabilizing factor in the national setting has been the relatively high support of the Social Democrats (*Socialdemokraterna*). It has been supported by almost 40-50% of the electorate during most of the post-war period (see also Table 1). The Social Democrats is best described as a traditional working class party, which originally had a socialist agenda, but has developed into a centre-left party with the defence of the modern welfare state as its most important goal. As such, the party has been rather successful. Of all 28 appointed post-war cabinets, the Social Democrats has formed 23 of them (Constitutional Change and Parliamentary Democracies 2008), in most cases as a single-party minority cabinet, supported by the Left Party (*Vänsterpartiet*). This formerly communist party, has since the 1980's slowly developed into a broader and more pragmatic socialist movement. Albeit, the Left Party has never been able to threaten the Social Democratic hegemony of the left; it has constituted a necessary condition for a Social Democratic rule. Since the late 1980's the left bloc has been extended with the Greens (*Miljöpartiet de gröna*). Even though the Greens has been reluctant to position itself in either the left or the right bloc, it has in practice supported the Social Democrats and never really connected to the right bloc. The Greens started in the early 1980's, as a response to a growing interest in environmental issues and an increased criticism towards the political establishment (Wörlund 2005:241). It also proclaimed itself to be organised in a more modern and democratic fashion (Lundgren 1991), however, over time the party has developed into resemble any other traditional parties. Between 1998 and 2006, governmental 'contracts' was written between the Social Democrats, Left party and the Greens (Bale & Blomgren 2008), that meant a continued Social

Democratic rule, with extensive influence of the other two parties. Currently, these three parties are negotiating on a fully fledged coalition government after the upcoming national election in 2010.

Since the beginning of the 1990's, the right-wing bloc includes four parties. The Moderates (*Moderata samlingspartiet*), is traditionally characterised as a conservative party, but have, since the 1970s, shifted towards a more neo-liberal position (Widfeldt 2005:115). Second, the Liberals (*Folkpartiet liberalerna*), emphasise social liberal values, arguing for a developed welfare state while advocating market solutions (Pierre & Widfeldt 1992). Third, the Centre Party (*Centerpartiet*), is traditionally rural-based and emphasises the centre-periphery divide rather than the left-right cleavage (Bäck & Möller 1997:70). Last, the Christian Democrats (*Kristdemokraterna*), was created in the 1960's as a reaction against a growing secularisation. It stressed the nuclear family as the most important entity of society and criticised the negative effects of urbanisation (see further Bäck & Möller 1997:86). Today, the Christian Democrats emphasises the division between religion and politics, which is a strategy to broaden the electoral base, but the religious heritage is still important for the party. Historically, all these parties (except the Christian Democrats) have alternated as the stronger part of the right-wing bloc, but since the beginning of the 1980s the Moderates has been the winner (see also Table 1). The overall domination of the Social Democrats in Sweden has made it hard for the right wing parties to enter government. Moreover, these parties have had a hard time collaborating, because they more or less compete for the same votes. However, since the 2006 national election, the Moderates are leading a majority coalition with the other three. This means that the current right wing majority coalition (and the perhaps to be left wing coalition), has rewritten the political map of Sweden. Earlier, the single minority government was the rule, today majority coalitions seems to be the future.

Parties' position on EU-issues

Sweden joined the European Union in 1995 after a narrow victory for the proponents of membership. Since then, Sweden has had a referendum on joining the EMU in 2003, which resulted in a no. The electorate has stayed divided in its view on the EU, even though the support for the membership has slowly turned more positive. In the 2008 Eurobarometer, 54% declared that the membership is a good thing, which places Sweden in the middle among the member states (European Commission 2008). The conflict between Eurosceptics and EU-advocates is also represented between and within parties. The Left Party and the Greens were both strongly against a membership in the 1994 referendum and they still represent the main Eurosceptic movements (even though the Greens has abandoned its demand that Sweden should leave the EU). On the other side, we find the Moderates and the Liberals, who are both the strongest proponents for a more integrated Union as well as a stronger Swedish engagement. The rest of the parties are more or less divided on their support for the Union and some of them obviously are not in agreement with their traditional voters. This is especially true for the Social Democrats. When comparing the results from the latest elections to the national parliament and the European parliament (Table 1), it is obvious that the Social Democrats present a less attractive alternative in the later.

	EP election 1999	NP election 2002	EP election 2004	NP election 2006
Moderates	20.7%	15.2%	18.2%	26.2%
Centre Party	6.0%	6.1%	6.2%	7.9%
Liberals	13.9%	13.3%	9.8%	7.5%
Christian Democrats	7.6%	9.1%	5.6%	6.6%
Social Democrats	26.0%	39.8%	24.5%	35.0%
Left Party	15.8%	8.3%	12.7%	5.9%
Greens	9.5%	4.6%	5.9%	4.3%
June List	-	-	14.40%	0.5%

Source: Compiled data from the Swedish election authorities at <http://www.val.se/>

The Social Democrats is approximately 10% weaker in the EP election compared to the national election. At the same time, the Left Party is markedly stronger in the EP election, which is a result of traditionally Social Democratic voters, supporting the Left Party's Eurosceptic position.

The EU has also created conflicts within the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats, albeit, not as severe (so far) as in the Social Democrats. Both these parties have had more or less organized fractions of Eurosceptics since the referendum in 1994. However, the party leadership in both parties, have been very pro-EU. The Centre Party argued against Sweden joining the EMU in the referendum, but has, since then, shifted position into an increasingly convinced advocate for a deeper integration. In the Christian Democrats, the EU-issue has become linked to a debate on ideological purity vs. pragmatism, which has made the conflict on EU-issues more serious. We will return to this later on.

Hitherto, however, there have not been any genuine party splits because of the EU issue and for a long time it looked like the parties managed to embrace both critical and positive voices within the old party structures. However, in the aftermath of the EMU-referendum in 2003, a number of Eurosceptics (mainly covering the centre-right ideological spectrum) started the June List. This rapidly attracted a lot of attention. The reason was that no other party declared itself to be positive to EU-membership, but against a continued shift of power from the member state to Brussels. Secondly, no right wing party represented a more Eurosceptic position⁵⁵⁸. On the left, the Greens and the Left Party constitutes this alternative. In the 2004 EP-election the June List gathered over 14% of the votes (see table 1). The party also ran for the national parliament in 2006; however, the result was catastrophic (0.47%) and it is too soon to say if the EP-election was a one-time success or if the party manages to maintain its support.

This shows that the Swedish party system is not clear-cut when it comes to the view on the EU-integration. That is, some parties' traditional supporters are not too happy about their party's EU-policies. However, the new EU-dimension has not rendered a new party system and this means that the conflict has to be taken within parties rather than between. This obviously could influence the way parties select candidates to the EP.

⁵⁵⁸ The June List tried to define itself as neither left nor right, but as it turned out it mainly attracted centre-right wing votes.

The process of candidate selection in Swedish party organisations

Until now, we have looked at specific aspects of the Swedish political environment. However, the process to select candidates starts *within* party organisations. Sometimes, this process is regarded to be outside the scope of democratic politics; it is an internal affair of the party⁵⁵⁹. However, since this is the first barrier for the elected representative to climb, it is important to scrutinize. Therefore, we will now turn to the intra-party arena and try to understand how parties arrange these processes and what consequences certain arrangements have on the selection of candidates. We will start by taking a more general perspective on candidate selection procedures that facilitates a comparison of the parties' procedures.

A general perspective on candidate selection procedures

The selection of candidates within a political system should be regarded as process rather than a decision (Rahat & Hazan 2001; Blomgren 2003: 128). Thus, it is fruitful to divide the selection process into different phases and by that analyse the influence of various actors in the intra-party struggle. Thus, the process is divided into three phases and first, we have a *nomination phase*, where different candidates are proposed. Second, we have the *selection phase*. Someone has to select among the nominees and the selection phase is perhaps the most important of the three steps. Third, we have the *decision phase*. The difference between the selection and the decision is crucial. There could be one set of actors (for example the regional branches) that selects among proposed candidates, but in the end, another actor decides on the list. This happens, for example, when the party executive has a mandatory right to confirm a candidate or a set of candidates.

These three phases of the process may involve various sets of actors within a party. Since this analysis tries to understand to what extent ordinary members are involved in the selection of candidates, an Inclusion-Exclusion dimension is applied (see Figure 1)⁵⁶⁰.

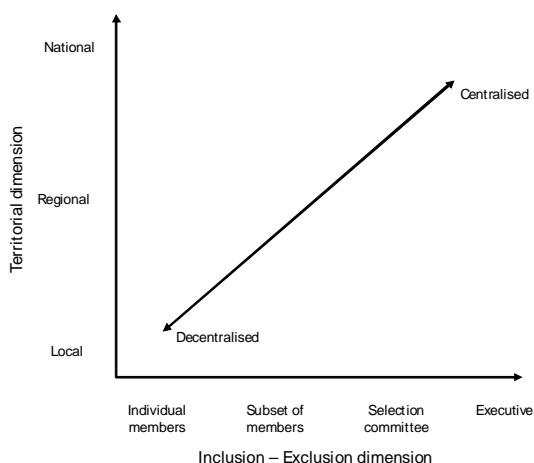


Figure 1: Dimensions involved in the process of selecting candidates in parties

⁵⁵⁹ There is a reason that one early influential work on candidate selection procedures is titled "The secret garden of politics" (Gallagher & Marsh 1988).

⁵⁶⁰ Rahat and Hazan (2001), also uses the inclusion and exclusion dimension, but applies it to the entire selection process, i.e. also voters. Since our focus is on the intra-party arena, these categories are excluded.

This dimension tries to define the kind of actor that is involved at a certain step in the process. These might be connected to a certain organizational level of the party and consequently we need to include a territorial dimension.

The territorial dimension, in Figure 1, is rather self-explanatory, while the inclusion-exclusion dimension probably is not. *Individual members* refer to when a party includes the members in one way or the other (for example in a primary). The second, *subset of members*, mean when a party arranges any kind of conference/congress, where representatives of members get to vote on the candidates. *Selection committee* refers to when the party appoint a group of people that do the scouting and maybe the selecting of candidates. *Executive* refers to the involvement of the party leadership. Note that all these categories may appear on different levels of the party and at different times in the process of selecting candidates.

Moderates

During the preparations for the 2009 EP-elections, the Moderates' national board⁵⁶¹ in appointed a selection committee and lay down the directives for the committee. This committee should include representatives of the regional bodies (förbund) and associated organisations (Moderaterna 2008). The role of the selection committee was to monitor the whole process of selecting candidates for the election. This meant that it gathered all the nominations that arrived from members and associated organisations. Thereafter, the committee arranged a list in alphabetic order and sent this to the 26 regional party boards. These respectively selected five of these candidates. If someone was listed by at least three regional boards, the candidate was automatically included in the next step of the process. The selection committee and the party board had the right to include names on the ballot, besides those nominees that were automatically listed. An intra-party primary, which was the next step, was arranged with the help of a postal ballot. All members (including members in associated organisations) had the right to vote by choosing five of the nominees on the list. Based on the result of the primary, the committee put together a proposal. Important though, the selection committee was not required to follow the primary result. However, the committee was obliged to follow certain directives from the party board (Moderaterna 2007). This states that the top four slots should alternate male and female candidates. Furthermore, the composition of the list should represent the population concerning age, ethnicity and place of living. When the nomination committee was ready, it presents the result to the party council (partiråd)⁵⁶² for the final decision.

The party's view on EU is not contested in the Moderates. This means that the conflicts have not been that severe when it comes to select candidates to the EP. The only thing that to a certain extent stirred up some debate during the latest selection process had to do with the role of the primary procedure. The two winners of the primary were two incumbents, Gunnar Hökmark and Christofer Fjellner. On third place the newcomer Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (wife of the current foreign minister Carl Bildt) turned up. At a certain point it looked like this would mean that Corazza Bildt (due to the party's relatively new gender rule), would push down the popular Fjellner. This would have been hard to swallow for some party activists (Krassén 2008). However, in the end, after the decision on the party council, Corazza Bild ended up on eighth place, which instead turned the debate around; to question the function of having primaries at

⁵⁶¹ The party board consists of the party leadership and ten appointed regional representatives. It convenes on a regular basis several times a year.

⁵⁶² The party council convenes at least once a year and consists of the party board and 35 appointed representatives.

all when the result obviously has minor effect on the end result. There are, however, a number of reasons why these recent events will not create any long-standing problem in the party. Corazza Bildt is a newcomer and the party in general was uncertain on her position (Karlsson 2009a). Second, she lives in Stockholm, as do a number of the other top candidates, which therefore was turned against her. Third, the three top candidates that eventually were selected (Hökmark, followed by Anna Ibrisagic and Fjellner) are all incumbents with a strong support in the party.

Liberals

In the Liberals, the party board⁵⁶³ appointed a selection committee (*valberedning*) and decided on the rules that regulate the selection process. The selection committee, then, administered the entire process and started by announcing the right for all members to nominate candidates. The national party collected these nominations and the candidates that accept the nomination were listed and this was sent to all members. All members had the right to vote in the primary that followed, by selecting three candidates that they wanted on the first slot and three candidates on the second slot (Folkpartiet liberalerna 2008a). The selection committee administered the primary and when it was over the committee put together a proposal for the final decision. The primary was only consultative and the selection committee did not have to follow the result. The party uses a gender quota and the party board decided to give alternate places to men and women (Folkpartiet liberalerna 2008b). When the proposal was finished, it was conveyed to the party council (partiråd)⁵⁶⁴ that made the final decision.

The selection process in the Liberals did not create that much of a debate. The Liberals has, perhaps most eagerly among the Swedish parties, scouted for candidates that are famous because of other things than party politics. This strategy has not always been successful, but in the 1999 EP-election the top candidate was Marit Paulsen, a well-known debater without a long history in the party⁵⁶⁵. This turned out to be a brilliant move and the party received 14% in the election and tripled the number of MEPs. This has then been referred to as the 'Paulsen-effect'. She stayed in the EP between 1999 and 2004 and now she wants to return. Paulsen ended up on the top in the primary, and it was an easy choice for the party council to put her on the first place on the ballot, albeit, this meant that the party's incumbent MEP, Olle Schmidt, ended up on second place.

Christian Democrats

The process to select the candidates for the EP in the Christian Democrats is regulated in the party's statutes (Kristdemokraterna 2008). The process started with the party council (partifullmäktige)⁵⁶⁶ appointing a selection committee, which monitored the entire selection process. The first step was to gather nominations. All members, local and regional bodies, as well as associated organisations, had the right to nominate. All nominations were administered through the regional level and sent to the selection committee, which had the possibility to add nominees. Then an intra-party primary was arranged. However, not all members were entitled

⁵⁶³ The party board contains the party leader, vice party leaders and 21 representatives from the regional level.

⁵⁶⁴ The party council gathers the party board and 61 appointed representatives from the district level and convene at least two times a year.

⁵⁶⁵ Paulsen became a member of the Liberals right before the 1999 EP-election.

⁵⁶⁶ The party council convenes at least once a year and consist of the party board and a number of representatives from the regional level, altogether around 70-80 people.

to vote in this primary; only the appointed representatives at the yearly meetings on the regional level (distriktsstämmaombud)⁵⁶⁷. On the basis of the result of the primary, the selection committee then composed a proposal. The committee did not have to follow the result of the primary, although should of course take it into account. Furthermore, the ballot should give alternate places to men and women, as well as balanced regarding professional background and place of living (Kristdemokraterna 2007). The proposal of the selection committee was then sent to the party council that made the final decision.

If the Liberals represent the “happy family” when it comes to decide its candidate to the 2009 EP-election; the Christian Democrats represent the opposite. Even though the party leadership in the Christian Democrats is very favourable towards the EU, a minority among the members is still sceptical towards further integration. In the process to select candidates for the 2009 EP election, this became very apparent. The former MEP and current member of the national parliament, Lennart Sacrédeus, ended up on fourth place in the primary. In the end, however, he was not included on the selection committee’s proposal or on the final list. This stirred up a massive internal and public debate. First of all, it was questioned, on the basis of intra-party democratic principles, if the selection committee (and eventually the party council) is entitled to disregard the primary in this insolent way. Second, this criticism was linked to a more fundamental debate on the Christian Democrats’ politics and ideology. Sacrédeus is known for his EU-scepticism and quite controversial statements regarding abortion and homosexual marriages. He is therefore, a representative of a more fundamentalist perspective among some members who are incredulous to the more pragmatic stance of the current party leadership. In the midst of the debate, the party leader, Göran Hägglund, publically stated that Sacrédeus was not a team player and therefore not to be trusted (Karlsson 2009b). This did not ease the debate. It is important to remember, though, that Sacrédeus was placed fourth in the primary result, and the chance of the Christian Democrats to get more than one MEP elected is small. However, in the 1999 election, Sacrédeus was placed fifth on the ballot, but he eventually became elected with the help of preference votes. This was obviously something that the party leadership wanted to avoid this time. The top candidate for the Christian Democrats is Ella Bohlin, a former leader of the youth organisation, and she is presented as the young and modern alternative. She ended up on second place in the primary, which means that her support is at least reasonably strong in the party. However, the discussion on the use of primaries as a method to select candidates, as well as the more ideological debate, will most certainly continue in the Christian Democrats for quite some time.

Centre Party

In the Centre Party, the statutes regulate that it is the national level of the party that is responsible for the nomination process to the EP-elections (Centerpartiet 2007b). How this is done is regulated in the working order of the party, which says that the party congress⁵⁶⁸ should appoint a selection committee, which should monitor the entire selection process (Centerpartiet 2007a). All members of the party had the right to nominate candidates and these nominations were directly submitted to the selection committee, which prepared a detailed presentation of all the nominees. Also the Centre Party arranged an intra-party primary and all members received

⁵⁶⁷ The regional level consists of 22 districts, which together give approximately 1000 representatives. These representatives where entitled to vote in the primary.

⁵⁶⁸ The congress is the leading body of the Centre Party. It is held every second year and gathers approximately 500 delegates from local and district level.

a ballot on which they could give priority to the different candidates. The votes were sent to the selection committee, which then prepared the final proposal. The selection committee was not obliged to follow the result of the primary, but obviously should take it into account. It is then the party council (*förtroenderåd*)⁵⁶⁹ that made the final decision.

Also in the Centre Party, the fortune of intra-party primaries was discussed. Once again, the position of EU-sceptical candidates was in focus. In the primary, Sven Bergström and Hans Lindqvist ended up on third and fourth place. Both these candidates are known EU-sceptics. Bergström, currently a member of the national parliament, ended up on the eighth place on the final list, and Lindqvist, who was an MEP between 1995 and 1999, was excluded all together. Despite the party's move towards a more EU-positive position (Carlbom 2008), this will probably not create such tumult as in the Christian Democrats. One reason is that this event was not connected to a deeper conflict regarding the party's ideological development. Another reason is that the party's chance of winning more than one MEP is very small, and the top candidate in the final proposal, the incumbent Lena Ek, also won the primary.

June List

In the June List, a selection committee was appointed by the party board⁵⁷⁰. This committee administered the process and collected the nominations. All members had the right to nominate candidates. The next phase was done in two steps. First, the regional party leaders (*valledare*)⁵⁷¹ were asked to send in a ranking list of ten candidates, based on all the nominated candidates, to the selection committee. It was not decided how the regional party leaders should go about forming this list and according to one representative of the selection committee, some of them processed it through the local organisation, but not all. The second procedure was that the party's sympathisers⁵⁷² were able to send in a list of ten candidates (not ranked) by e-mail or regular mail. The selection committee then prepared a proposal based on the result of the primary, together with additional information on the candidates that has been collected by the selection committee. The party board finally made the decision on the list (Junilistan 2008).

The June List was created before the EP election in 2004 and successfully won three mandates. It was the two founders of the party, Nils Lundgren and Lars Wohlin, which entered the parliament, together with the less known Hélène Goudin. During the years that have passed, Lars Wohlin has left the party (and joined the Christian Democrats) and Nils Lundgren has stepped down as the party leader, as well as decided not to run for the parliament in the 2009 election. For a while, the party's future seemed very uncertain. The situation was resolved when the very well known social democrat, Sören Wibe, stepped in as the party leader. Wibe has, since the referendum on membership to the EU, been a highly profiled EU-sceptic and he has especially gathered social democrats that do not agree with the party's positive view on EU. The position as a party leader was shared with Annika Eriksson, who has a history in the Liberals. It was expected that Wibe also wanted to candidate for the EP, since this is the only political institution in which the party is represented. This was where the problem started. When the party board decided the list, Sören Wibe was placed on the top position, and four of the other

⁵⁶⁹ The party council in the Centre Party consists of the party board and 50 appointed representatives from the district level.

⁵⁷⁰ The party board consist of the party chairmen and eight to ten representatives from the regional level.

⁵⁷¹ These are the leaders of every of the 29 constituencies.

⁵⁷² The June List distinguishes itself as a network party and has sympathisers and not member.

party board members were placed right after him. Annika Eriksson was on the sixth place in the proposal and her reaction was very strong. She decided to step down from her position as party leader. She claimed that the intra-party primary was a more or less rigged process and that the party is undemocratically governed (Eriksson 2009). Wibe defended himself with the argument that Eriksson was disappointed since she ended up on seventh place in the primary (Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå 2009). It is also noticeable that the incumbent candidate, Hélène Goudin, was placed as number four, which means that the party has to do even better in this election, than in the last, in order for her to get elected. It should be said, however, that the final list is very close to the result of the two selection procedures. That is, Wibe has a very strong support in the party, as well as the other top candidates. Furthermore, the June List has a trickier situation when forming its list, than many other parties, because it wants to include representatives from the whole ideological spectrum (people that has a heritage in other political parties). Therefore, the limited number of slots on a list necessarily leads to hard competition. All together, the June List currently is more or less an empty vessel for EU-sceptical candidates for the EP and the party's survival is probably due to if it manages to succeed as such once again. Party leaders jumping ship and harsh criticism regarding intra-party democracy, does not help in this respect.

The Greens

In the Greens the party congress⁵⁷³ appointed a selection committee (*valberedning*) that handled the selection of candidates. This selection committee was not specifically appointed for the EP-election, but is used for a number of purposes (Miljöpartiet 2008b). The selection committee collected nominees and all members had the right to suggest candidates. When this was done, the selection committee formed a list of 30 candidates, which was put to an intra-party primary. In this primary, all members got to rank 5 to 10 candidates and sent this to the selection committee. The party then used a counting method called Instant Runoff Voting (IRV). This is said to lessen the problem that, for example, a third less popular candidate gets elected, because the votes are split between two more popular candidates. The most important aspect of the greens' primary, compared to the other parties, was however, that it was binding. The selection committee, could adjust the result of the primary in order to satisfy a 50% gender quota (Miljöpartiet 2008a), but this is more or less a mechanical operation, and in practice the end result of the primary constituted the final list.

The selection of candidates in the Greens did run smoothly and one obvious explanation is the use of binding primaries. The party simply avoids the sensitive debate on whether to follow the primary result or not. In that sense, the more decentralised procedure helps keeping things peaceful; on the other hand, lessens the party leaderships' control over the process. Furthermore, things went relatively smooth because the incumbent MEP, Carl Schlyter, had decided to run for a second term. To be the incumbent candidate obviously gives you certain benefits and since Schlyter's work in the EP had a strong support in the party, not to select him to the top position would be a huge surprise. The second top candidate, Isabell Lövin, a famous journalist with the environment as her speciality, was not a member of the Greens when she was asked to candidate. Here candidacy is an effect of the party's scouting for people that are known for other things than party politics. However, she became a member after she had accepted her candidacy.

⁵⁷³ The party congress in the Greens is a yearly event and the highest decision making body of the party. It consists of appointed representatives of the local and regional levels of the party.

Social Democrats

In the Social Democrats, the process was quite different from the other parties. The statutes state that every member has the right to nominate candidates to the EP, and that it is the party board⁵⁷⁴ that define the rules regarding the selection process (Socialdemokraterna 2005). According to the party board's decision, the regional level collected all the nominations and the regional board (distriktsstyrelse) had the opportunity to rank the candidates (although not exclude anyone). This was not compulsory, but most of regional boards did. Consequently, the regional level was, at least in some respect, included in the selection phase. These nominations (and rankings) were then conveyed to the national party board. As all party board decision, it was prepared by the party secretary. However, since it turned out that the party secretary stood a good chance of becoming the party's top candidate, the preparation was made by the party leader. A reference group, containing representatives of the regional level, was at the party leader's disposal. This group could not make any decision, but give the party leader indication about its view on the candidates. The party leader's proposal was then sent to the party board for decision. When the party board made up its list, it should, according to the board's own guidelines, give alternate places to men and women, as well as take a broad geographic representation into account. According to the statutes, this could be the end of the process. However, the party board may delegate the final decision on the list to the party council (förtroenderådet)⁵⁷⁵ and this was also what happened. Thus, the proposal ends up on the party council which made the final decision.

The most troubled among the Swedish parties, by the EU-issue, is the Social Democrats. Different views on EU constantly stir up intra-party conflicts, and this becomes most evident when the party shall select its candidates to the EP. In the first election, the Social Democrats presented several lists, which mixed Eurosceptic representatives with more pro-EU ones. The result was an in-built conflict in the EP-group during the first years of Swedish membership. This was something that the party wanted to avoid in the 1999 election. At that point, the party presented a single list, with a strong bias of pro-EU candidates, which was heavily criticised within the party. The strategy to form a single list was repeated in the 2004-election. The only Eurosceptic candidate (Anna Hedh), was put very far down on the list and even on the backside of the ballot. However, enough preference votes, made it possible for her to become the party's representative. The selection of candidates to the 2009 election, has however, preceded without any major disturbance. This is to a certain degree due to the way the party selects its candidates. The party does not arrange any primaries and the members' influence over the process is limited. The result of the process, this time, was that the party secretary, and (at least former) EU-sceptic, Marita Ulvskog became the top candidate. She is followed by Olle Ludvigsson, an experienced trade unionist, three incumbents Åsa Westlund, Göran Färm and Anna Hedh (who obviously preformed her duty well in Brussels, since she have a stronger support today than five years ago). The Social Democratic ballot is characterised by a well-balanced mix of male and female, professional background, age and places of living. The leverage to design the ballot according to such demands is obviously larger when the selection procedure is limited to the party leadership. Furthermore, the selection of Ulvskog and Hedh also makes it hard for the EU-

⁵⁷⁴ The party board contains 33 appointed representatives from the regional level and is the highest decision making body between the congresses (which is arranged at least every fourth year).

⁵⁷⁵ The party council is not, as in most of the other parties, a decision making body of the party. Instead its function is a deliberative body (samrådsorgan), in which the party board may present proposals and discuss issues with a broader group of party representatives. The party council meets at least once a year and gathers 120 representatives from the regional level.

critic fraction of the party to make a solid argument against the list. This may also be seen as a strategy to prevent a possible loss of votes to the now social democratic lead June List (Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå 2008). Consequently, the Social Democratic list for the 2009 election is good example of advanced ballot engineering.

Left Party

In the Left Party, the statutes say that it is the party board⁵⁷⁶ that decides about how the process to select candidates should be done (Vänsterpartiet 2008). According to the board's decision, the selection committee, which is appointed by the congress⁵⁷⁷ and handles all sorts of appointments in the party, should also be responsible for the party's selection of candidates to the EP. All members, as well as all local and regional bodies, had the right to nominate candidates. These nominations were collected by the selection committee, which made up a proposal. This should follow the party's rule on equal female representation. The next step in the process was a national conference specifically gathered to handle stuff concerning the EP election. This conference⁵⁷⁸ gathered 101 representatives from the regional level and made the final decision on the list. According to the guidelines adopted by the party board (*valordning*), the decision should be made slot by slot. The reason is that this give the conference a stronger possibility to alter the list order, compared to if the decision would be made in one vote (i.e. for or against the joint proposal).

The Left Party is certainly among those that had a relatively trouble-free process in selecting its candidates for the 2009 election. There is a relatively strong consensus within the party regarding its position on EU-issues, which obviously facilitates the selection process. A second aspect, which we have seen also in other parties, is that the selection process becomes smoother when incumbents want to renew their mandate. In the Left Party, Eva-Britt Svensson, who has been one of the party's two MEPs during the last parliamentary term, wants to stay in the parliament. The second current MEP, Jens Holm, has declined. Svensson was one leading person behind the people's movement against EU (*Nej till EU*), during the referendum in 1994. The selection of her is of course a clear signal that the party's position regarding EU-integration is consistent. On the second and third place on the ballot, we find Hanna Löfqvist and Mikael Gustafsson, two less-known candidates without any national parliamentary experience. Generally, it seems that Left Party MEPs mainly come from outside the national parliamentary arena. This is true for the three top candidates on the 2009 list, as well as most of the former MEPs that has left the EP⁵⁷⁹.

⁵⁷⁶ The party board is the highest decision making body between the congresses. It gathers 22 representatives from regional level of the party and it meets at least six times a year.

⁵⁷⁷ The congress is the highest decision making body of the party. It is at least a biannual event and gathers 225 representatives from the regional level of the party.

⁵⁷⁸ The national election conference is not included in the party's normal statutes; however, the type of arrangement is used at ordinary elections on the regional level.

⁵⁷⁹ The Left Party has only had one former national MP in Brussels and that was Jörn Svensson between 1995 and 1999.

Conclusions

In the elections to the EP, Sweden is one constituency. This has a centripetal effect on the selection process within parties. That is, in all parties the main process is occurring on the national level. Table 2, summarizes the selection process in all parties, using the three phases, nomination, selection and decision, as the basis for a comparison.

The three different phases

Despite the national character of the EP elections, the sub-national level is included in various ways. In all parties, all members and sub-national bodies have the right to be involved in the first phase of the process, i.e. during the nominations. That is, in all parties it is thought that the nominations are coming from below. However, this first phase is the least influential in the entire process.

	Moderates	Liberals	Christian Democrats	Centre Party	June List	Greens	Social Democrats	Left Party
Nomination	Individual members	Individual members	Individual members	Individual members	Individual members	Individual members	Individual members	Individual members
Selection	Selection committee ↓ Regional board ↓ Primary ↓ Selection committee	Party board ↓ Primary ↓ Selection committee	Selection committee ↓ Vote among a subset of members on regional level ↓ Selection committee	Selection committee ↓ Primary ↓ Selection committee	Selection committee ↓ Regional party leaders ↓ Primary ↓ Selection committee	Selection committee ↓ Primary	Regional boards ↓ Party leader and reference group ↓ Party board	Selection committee
Decision	Party council	Party council	Party council	Party council	Party board	Primary	Party council	Specific election conference

Table 2: Candidate selection in Swedish political parties for the 2009 EP election

The selection phase, on the other hand, differs in many parties. Five out of eight parties used a consultative intra-party primary mechanism: Moderates, Liberals, Christian Democrats, Centre Party, and the June List. The decision maker in respective party did not have to follow the result of these primaries. This strategy is rather seen as a way to indicate the support of different candidates and probably give the becoming candidate a stronger legitimacy. This could, though, involve the party leadership in a dangerous game, since the result of the primary, might be another than the preference of the party leadership. This constituted a problem at least in the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party, which both excluded candidates that were perceived as dissidents. In the Moderates, which also adjusted the list quite radically after the primary, the reason had less to do with unwanted candidates, and more to do with balancing the ticket regarding other aspects. In the June List, the turbulence had more to do with a conflict between leaders, than a problem caused by the result of the primary as such. That is, in this case the

disappointed candidate did quite badly in the primary and could not use its result as an argument against her contestants.

The problem that a discrepancy between a result of a primary and the final decision may cause is avoided by parties that use a binding primary or by parties that do not arrange a primary at all. In the Greens, the result of the primary also constitutes the final list. Therefore, it is hard to make a case that the members were not included in its selection of EP-candidates. Either the Social Democrats or the Left Party used an intra-party primary procedure. In the case of the Social Democrats, the selection phase was more or less in the hands of the party board. It collected and administered all the nominations and in this case the party leader prepared the final proposal. This gave the party leadership a strong power to influence the end-result. The Left Party used a selection committee that collected the nominations and prepared the final proposal. This could give the party leadership as much power as in the case of the Social Democrats, however, it depends on its control over the selection committee. Since, the selection committee was appointed by the congress, this probably mean that the power of the leadership was not as strong as it otherwise could be.

The last phase, how the decision was made, differs to some extent in the parties. Almost all parties used some kind of regionally appointed subset of members, when the decision was made. These are in most cases established organisation units that meets a number of times a year. In a hierarchical perspective, these bodies are found bellow the congress, but above the party board. The involvement of these bodies is a strategy to legitimise the list as a whole, as well as the individual candidates. We find the only exceptions from this general picture, in the June List and the Greens. In the June List, the power to make the decision is given to the party leadership. In the Greens, the intra-party primary constitutes the list.

If we bring all these pieces together, some parties are more inclusive in terms of members' involvement in the process. The Greens obviously are on one end of the scale, which give the members the right to decide the list in a primary. Albeit, it is possible (and probable) that the party leadership, also in the Greens, have some saying in the process, this is not obvious when looking at the formal procedures. On the other end of the scale, we find the Social Democrats, where the party board defines the list during the selection phase and then present it to a more representative body. The chances of the party council, to influence the final list, is however relatively limited. Albeit, the possibility obviously exists, the votes often outbalance each other and it is much easier to defend the whole composition of a list, than make changes in the position of a particular candidate. On the exclusive side of the scale, we also find the June List, which give the ultimate decision to the party board. In between these two ends of the scale, we find a number of alternative strategies to handle the selection. The use of intra-party primaries may give the members a strong say in the process, but this depends on whether the party's decision maker respect the result or not. Parties that use various kinds of selection committees, give, if not stronger influence of the members, at least less influence to the party leadership. However, this obviously depends on how unbound the selection committee is. All this is, on the other hand, dependent on how contested the selection process is. If there are conflicts regarding something that is triggered in the selection process (for example the party's position on EU-issues), the party leadership may take a tighter control over the process. If the party is more in agreement, the party leadership may ease on the grip.

The candidates

It is a tricky process to balance a ticket when the number of positions is very limited. The parties have a number of aspects to taken into account. For example, a fair regional representation and a variation of the professional background are important aspects when selecting candidates. Furthermore, this report clearly shows that equal representation of men and women is a crucial issue in all Swedish parties. Either the parties have mandatory requirements regarding this or they define it as a very important goal. It also seems like the parties manage quite well in this respect. If we look at the 19 top-candidates and presume that the electoral result will be exactly the same as in the 2004 election, this would mean that Sweden deliver 10 women and 9 men to Brussels.

Another important aspect in selecting candidates is of course to have a good mixture of experienced and new candidates. We know that incumbent candidates always have an advantage, compared to newcomers, when it comes to the processes of selecting candidates within parties. The preparation for the 2009 election is not an exception in this respect. In Table 3, the presumed elected candidates (if the result would be the same as in 2004) are divided into three categories. Incumbents have served in the parliament during the last term. Newcomers have never been elected to the EP or the national parliament. The Veteran has been in the national parliament or in the EP before.

	Incumbents	Newcomer	Veteran
Moderates	3	1	
Centre Party	1		
Liberals	1		1
Christian Democrats		1	
Social Democrats	3	1	1
Left Party	1	1	
Greens	1		
June List		1	2
	10	5	4

* The 19 top-candidates are included and divided as if the election results would be the exact same as in the 2004 election.

Table 3: The profile of the candidates* to the 2009 EP election

As Table 3 show, the majority of the candidates are incumbents. The rest are more or less equally divided between Newcomers and Veterans. This is not that much of a surprise, but it shows that the numbers of open slots for non-incumbents are few and this obviously creates tensions within parties. Bearing this in mind, perhaps we could expect more conflicts within the parties, than actually took place. One reason for why this does not happen is probably that the position as an MEP is not the most attractive in a party. That is, to run for the national parliament is still more important. If a party has a severe conflict, this has to do with the view on EU-integration, rather than anything else. This dimension is still important when it comes to elections to the EP, inside as well as outside the parties in Sweden.

Influence of the European level

This paper clearly shows that the EP election is a concern of the national party apparatus, rather than sub-national levels. However, it is also a national concern in a second respect; none of the parties indicate any kind of coordination or contact with the pan-European party federations concerning candidate selection to the EP. Many of them state that the contacts start after the selection has been made. Some European parties arrange educations for the new candidates and presumably discussions with the leading candidates' starts at an early stage. However, none of this is connected to the selection process as such. Therefore, the only reasonable conclusion is that the election to the EP is a national concern and nothing else. However, this does not necessarily mean that it is 'national' issues that are the main focus of the parties; it just means that Europe is not *one* electoral arena.

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UNITED KINGDOM

Introduction

The UK has at present 78 seats in the European Parliament. After 2009 it will have 72. In Great Britain, since 1999 the d'Hondt quota system has been used to allocate seats at regional level. A 'closed list' system is used; meaning that parties submit lists of candidates and voters have one vote which they allocate to a party, not an individual candidate. Seats are allocated to parties starting with the person at the top of their list. This system means that, from the point of view of those seeking to be elected to the European Parliament, simply being selected for a list is not sufficient – a candidate must be placed far enough up their party list to stand a chance of winning.

Northern Ireland uses the Single Transferable Vote to elect its 3 MEPs. No parties from Northern Ireland are considered here since they do not match the criteria for examination. Since 2004 Gibraltar, a British territory to the South of Spain, has been included as part of the South West region.

This paper considers the selection processes of six parties: the Conservative Party, the Labour Party, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the Liberal Democrat Party, the Green Party and the British National Party (BNP). All of them except the BNP hold seats in the European Parliament. It describes the European policies of the parties concerned and the relevant legislation; it sets out and analyses formal and informal selection procedures; and considers the possible impact of domestic party groups in the European Parliament and pan-European parties and groups in the European Parliament upon them. It is based on analysis of the formal processes of each party, follow-up inquiries made to the parties, and other primary research.

The following table provides details from the 2004 European parliamentary election, for the six parties under consideration. It sets out their total vote, percentage vote share, seats total, and adjusted change in seats (for Great Britain, excluding Northern Ireland):

Party (group in the European Parliament)	Vote (millions)	Vote (%)	Seats total	Adjusted change in seats
Conservative (European People's Party/European Democrats)	4.4	26.7	27	-8
Labour (Socialist Group)	3.7	22.6	19	-6
United Kingdom Independence (Independence and Democracy)	2.7	16.2	12	+10
Liberal Democrat (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe)	2.5	14.9	12	+2
Green (Green/European Free Alliance)	1.0	6.2	2	+2
British National (-)	0.8	4.9	0	0

European policies of the parties

All six parties have policies on Europe, to which selected candidates can be expected to have expressed broad commitment, and to which they would be expected to adhere if elected to the European Parliament.

The **BNP** policy on Europe is as follows:

We are opposed to the Single European Currency, and support the overwhelming majority of the British people in their desire to keep the Pound and our traditional weights and measures....we stand for British withdrawal from the European Union.

The **Conservative Party** is the main opposition party in the UK and the largest UK party in the European Parliament. The present stated position of the party towards Europe, under the heading 'Reforming Europe' on the Conservative website, is that:

We believe in an open, flexible Europe in which countries work together to achieve shared goals, not the ever greater centralisation of power in Brussels. We believe that in democracies nothing lasting can be built without the people's consent. But people have been denied their say on the renamed EU Constitution.

The **Green Party** argues that 'To achieve the Green vision, Europe will need very different structures from those currently in existence. Europe should be made up of overlapping, co-operative, democratic, decentralised groupings of nations and regions....Europe must not become a super-state or global power bloc.'

The attitude of the **Labour** government to the EU is fairly summed up on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website:

The EU has brought benefits in many areas, though certainly there are other areas where the UK government would like to see improvements...Getting the right balance demands constant constructive engagement. Successive British governments have had little doubt that the benefits to the UK economy outweigh any problems, and make it important to continue to push forward our role in the EU.

The Liberal Democrat Party has for some time been the most supportive of UK participation in European integration. A document from the 2008 party conference puts the position as follows:

The EU has achieved a great deal in the last 50 years and continues to do much to increase prosperity and promote freedom and democracy, especially on the European continent.

However, the EU still needs to do more to put its own house in order so it can focus better on its core objectives and realise its full potential...While Labour and the Conservatives stand back, the Liberal Democrats provide the whole-hearted commitment to Europe which is essential to protect and promote the UK's national interest, in and through Europe.

UKIP describes itself in the following terms:

The UK Independence Party is committed to withdrawing Britain from the European Union. As the debate on the Lisbon Treaty has now made clear, the EU agenda is complete political union with all the main functions of national government taken over by the bureaucratic institutions of Brussels. UKIP

believes that this is not only bad for Britain's economy and prosperity, but it is an alien system of government that will ultimately prove to be totally unacceptable to the British people.

Legislation

There is some confusion about the precise legal framework for the selection of candidates. While some parties still operate on the basis that, for the purposes of the selection of candidates, they come under employment law, recent case law may point towards their being regarded as clubs or societies. Questions of this sort would normally only be of marginal political significance, but acquired salience when in 1996 an employment tribunal held that the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 constrained the ability of parties to discriminate positively in favour of women. Consequently the *Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act 2002* was introduced. Its purpose was 'to enable a political party, should it wish to do so, to adopt measures which regulate the selection of candidates for certain elections in order to reduce inequality in the numbers of men and women elected as candidates of the party.' Clause 1 of the 2002 Act includes a list of the relevant elections, of which one is 'elections to the European Parliament'. It does not prescribe how parties should go about exercising this opt out, leaving them open to try various methods. The 2002 Act applies universally to the entire UK, with no regional or national variation.

Parties apply this legal opt out in different ways for different types of election. In the past the Liberal Democrats have used a practice called 'zipping' whereby men and women alternate on the list, to ensure half of candidates are women. The party did not use the technique for selections for the 2009 European parliamentary elections, partly because of its success previously. The Conservative Party were faced with the prospect of fielding no female candidates in winnable positions in 2009, so introduced a rule that the women receiving the most votes in the members' ballot was placed first on the list after re-selected incumbents. There is some evidence of hostility towards this "positive discrimination" amongst Conservative activists. The unofficial ConservativeHome website complained in a post-mortem of the process on 3 April 2008:

Female candidates won better MEP slots even though they received fewer votes. The decision to guarantee that a woman candidate was automatically at the top of the non-incumbent list regardless of how many votes she had received reflected two things: (1) The fact that the existing MEP delegation included just one woman, Caroline Jackson, and she was retiring and (2) The Cameron's leadership's commitment to increase the representativeness of the party. If incumbents hadn't been protected the election of more women would have been natural. We believe that, for example, North West Tories would have preferred Jacqui Foster or Fiona Bruce to Sajjad Karim MEP, and Therese Coffey and Sarah Richardson would have been preferred to James Elles MEP in the South East. The rigging of the system in favour of incumbents prevented this. CCHQ [Conservative Campaign Headquarters] felt they had to give women special treatment and we ended up with most women receiving less votes than male candidates but being given higher places on the list by the party's preferential system.

The procedures

Selection processes for the European Parliament do not generally receive a high level of public interest, reflecting in part the relatively low turnout for the elections (although the 2004 poll saw

the highest proportion of the electorate to date participate). There has been some academic interest in procedures and their outcomes.⁵⁸⁰

However selection procedures can become subject to public scrutiny and controversy. In 1999 the Labour Party used a selection process whereby members voted to determine who was on the party list, with incumbent MEPs treated the same as others, but regional committees determined the order. There were complaints from the left of the party that this method was used as a means of removing MEPs deemed undesirable by the party leadership. After the European Elections of 2004, another controversy arose when a man elected as a UKIP MEP in 2004 was prosecuted and convicted for fraud in September 2007. He had already been charged at the time of his selection and UKIP complained that he had lied on his application form.

As we have seen, protest was voiced amongst party activists by the Conservative Party selection process for the 2009 European elections, and given an airing on ConservativeHome. We include passages from a ConservativeHome post of 3 April 2008 at the foot of relevant sections in our account of selection procedure, to illustrate the kind of criticisms that can arise.

A general point to be made is that parties vary in the extent to which their selection processes are formalised. The Labour Party, Liberal Democrats and Green Party have detailed documents setting out the position. The Conservative Party had a definite process, but it seems to have been arrived at in an *ad hoc* fashion, prompted by political circumstances surrounding this particular selection round. The BNP and UKIP seem to have less detailed or clearly formalised procedures.

Division of responsibility between central and regional party organs

All parties have roles for both regional and central party organs, but vary in how the balance is struck. Often there is a regional committee with responsibility for creating shortlists of candidates for members to vote on, but with a role for intervention from the centre.

In the Green Party, which explicitly advocates taking decisions at the lowest possible level, each region conducts the selection procedure, determining how many candidates it submits for its shortlist and the conduct of the campaign, but having regard to decisions of party conference, the Green Party Regional Council and the Green Party Executive. Each Green Party Regional Council appoints a European Regional Returning Officer at a ‘properly advertised Regional meeting which is open to all members resident in that Region’. The meeting can also determine timetabling and other details. The Regional Council appoints a European Elections Tribunal to rule on disputes, with appeals referred on to the Regional Council.

The Liberal Democrat Party has a federal structure. Regional Executive committees appoint a Selection Committee responsible for working with a Regional Returning Officer – from outside the region - for organising the process. The Regional Returning Officer does not vote at meetings, but ‘has the right to intervene, including taking the Chair, if necessary’.

The Labour Party Rule Book states that the party National Executive Committee (NEC) ‘has the authority to modify these rules and any procedural rules and guidelines as required to meet particular circumstances or to further the stated objectives and principles of these rules.

⁵⁸⁰ See eg: Martin Holland, ‘British Political Recruitment: Labour in the Euro Elections of 1979’, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Jan., 1987), pp53-70.

Furthermore, the NEC has the power to impose candidates where it deems this is required by the circumstances.' The NEC issues broad procedural guidelines and the timetable for the selection process; while regional boards and Scottish and Welsh executives implement the guidelines, with the agreement of an officer approved by the NEC being required for their particular procedures and timetables.

The BNP has a strong leadership principle. Rather than a committee such as the Labour Party NEC it is the National Chairman who has ultimate authority. The BNP constitution states that 'Once elected, the National Chairman shall have full executive power over all the affairs of the party'. While the constitution does not refer specifically to the selection of European parliamentary candidates, the grip of the National Chairman on election matters is made explicit by the following passages:

No local branch or group of the party may undertake to contest any election, whether parliamentary or local government without the prior consent of the National Chairman or National official or Regional Organiser authorised by him.

Local units must submit their choice of candidate for approval to the National Chairman or a person authorised by him to approve candidates.

Finding potential candidates

The ideological disposition of parties can influence the approach they take to encouraging candidates to put themselves forward.

The Labour Party is committed to taking 'targeted action...to increase the representation of women, ethnic minority and disabled members and those from manual and clerical backgrounds' in its pool of candidates for selection.

Views with relevance to selection processes are included in the Green Party 'Philosophical Basis'. It asserts that

A healthy society is based on voluntary co-operation between empowered individuals in a democratic society, free from discrimination whether based on race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion, social origin or any other prejudice....We emphasise democratic participation and accountability by ensuring that decisions are taken at the closest practical level to those affected by them.

Green Party Byelaws state that the regional meeting at which the European Regional Returning Officer is appointed 'shall consider the question of gender or ethnic minority balance on the Regional List.'

The Liberal Democrat Party extends the principle of balanced representation as far as the membership of its regional selection committees, which must 'provide as near as possible for an equal number of men and women, a fair urban/rural, age and ethnic balance...and a balance between officers of the Regional Party and those holding public office and those who are not.' The shortlists they create have gender balance quotas; and interviews 'must not be held in a venue inaccessible to applicants with disabilities'.

Other parties may be considered less disposed towards taking positive action of the kind described above. Central to BNP political rhetoric, and relevant to the issue of candidate selection, is the idea of a problem of ‘reverse discrimination’. The Party complains that ‘Increasingly our people are facing...reverse discrimination’.

Requirements placed on possible candidates

For the Labour Party, someone seeking selection must have been a member of the party for twelve months, and meet ‘minimum standards for accreditation as determined by the NEC through an assessment process’. Candidates recommended by nationally affiliated organisations (such as trades unions) through their own processes can be automatically considered.

Green Party byelaws state that each nominee must have been a member of the Party continuously for a year; and that a Regional meeting can extend this requirement to two years. However, membership of a Green Party which is a member of the European Federation of Green Parties can be considered equivalent. Byelaws state further that:

In extraordinary circumstances, a person who would not normally qualify under category (b) above may be nominated for selection by 20 members of the Region for which they wish to stand and who will have been Green Party members for at least 2 years at the close of nominations

Such a procedure could presumably allow for a recent high-profile convert to the Green Party to stand with a view to boosting the electoral prospects of the Party.

In the Green Party a de-selection ballot is triggered by a petition of at least 20 per cent of members in the Region.

Applicants for candidacy for the Green Party are required to fill out an application form explaining ‘the expected role of a Green Party MEP and nominees will be expected to state in writing how and why they can match this role’. They are required to ‘state whether or not they are willing to abide by any pecuniary arrangement made concerning’ the party and its MEPs; and ‘indicate whether or not they intend to be an active member of the list of candidates, irrespective of their position on it’. This information is made available to members prior to hustings.

The BNP requires possible candidates to be ‘fully paid up members’. They are allowed to stand for ‘a Region other than the one that you live in and you may apply to stand for more than one Region.’ They must complete a form, two sides of A4 long, which asks for a series of standard details, including marital status, BNP membership number, years of continuous membership and ‘Position (e.g. Organiser, Activist etc). It asks for details of branch and ‘Euro Region you wish to contest’. There are then a series of boxes to be filled covering education, employment, ‘Political experience’; and hobbies and interests. The applicant is then asked for ‘Other information (for example list all convictions, even those that are “spent” and any other information about yourself which might possibly be of interest to us or the newspapers (good or bad).’ The form also asks ‘Why do you want to be a candidate?’, requiring the applicant not to ‘write more words than can be fitted into the box’. The final questions are: ‘Why do you think you will be a good Member of the European Parliament?’ and ‘Do you agree to abide by the decisions of the Party with respect to the conduct of its MEPs and candidates?’ Many of the requirements on this form are mirrored by other parties.

Other qualities typically looked for in party candidate screening processes include the ability to work in a team, a campaigning record, knowledge of relevant political issues, and presentational skill.

Arrangements for existing MEPs

Sitting MEPs are handled in different ways by different parties. For the Labour Party, MEPs who achieve at least 50 per cent in a ballot of Constituency Labour Partys and affiliated organisations in their region/ nation are automatically included in the shortlist for submission to individual members. Those who do not achieve 50 per cent then have to seek nomination alongside other non-MEPs. For UKIP, sitting MEPs have no special rights to be included on the shortlist and have to go through the same procedure as all other candidates for selection. Similarly the Liberal Democrat Party has no incumbent protection, but takes the view that it is not needed because sitting MEPs have sufficient public profile virtually to guarantee they will perform well in ballots of members.

The arrangement for the Conservative Party appears to have been that sitting MEPs who wish to stand again met in the first instance with an 'expanded Regional Selection College'. The College voted by secret ballot. An MEP that received 50 per cent + 1 of the College's votes was not then required to appear on the later, larger ballot paper with other candidates. If there was more than one Conservative MEP in the region concerned, a separate ballot paper could be submitted to local members, inviting them to rank incumbents, who would appear at the top of the list in the order determined by members. MEPs who did not receive 50 per cent + 1 in the College ballot could then put themselves forward for ranking in the ballot alongside new candidates. Some critics saw this procedure as being designed to protect MEPs whom they felt were too committed to the integrationist EPP group in the European Parliament, Conservative membership of which is an issue of contention within the Conservative Party in the UK, the local membership of which is widely, if by no means unanimously, hostile towards the EU. The selection process was attacked on Conservativehome in the following terms:

Grassroots members were prevented from deselecting incumbents. The decision from which the other abuses flow was the decision to ensure that sitting MEPs could not lose their places at the top of the regional lists which determine the likelihood of being elected to the European Parliament. Timothy Kirkhope MEP, then Leader of the Tory MEPs, and Caroline Abel Smith, responsible for European issues on the Party Board, wanted to ensure that rank-and-file members could not oust incumbent MEPs. They feared a backlash from grassroots members who had seen many MEPs undermine the leadership's position on the EPP and who had been consistently supportive of European integration. They knew that members would be much better informed of MEPs' voting records in this internet age and they knew that that would spell disaster for a number of MEPs' careers. Their initial proposal to the Party Board was that individual members should have no role in reselection. This was thwarted by Francis Maude and the MPs and elected representatives of the voluntary party that sit on the Party Board. They guaranteed that grassroots members should rank all non-incumbent candidates but only after Regional Selection Committees had decided whether sitting MEPs should automatically be at the top of the list. We predicted that the RSCs would rubber stamp every MEP and they did.

Campaigning

Party hierarchies take varied attitudes to campaigning. Green Party Byelaws state that ballots 'will not close before there has been at least one properly advertised Regional meeting at which all nominees for the List are invited to present themselves and may be questioned by members'. The Liberal Democrat Party requires one or more hustings meetings, to be held in venues 'geographically neutral as between applicants'.

On the other hand it was alleged that the Conservative Party enforced a 'three month purdah period'; with no official hustings and unofficial hustings discouraged. According to the ConservativeHome website, candidates could only communicate with members via template CVs edited by Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ).

Green Party candidates are specifically forbidden from endorsing each-other; and are prevented from offering money to the Party in exchange for selection. Liberal Democrat Party rules prevent the Selection Committee from asking if a candidate will donate money to the campaign.

The Liberal Democrat Party organises a mail-out to members, including details of the campaign and candidates and their manifestos, which must be produced on one sheet of A4 paper. Candidates may produce one further leaflet for distribution by means other than the post. They cannot circulate material to members except with the agreement of the Returning Officer. No endorsements or defamations of any kind are allowed. There is strict regulation of the quantity of electronic communication with members. Canvassing is encouraged. Professional campaigners are not permitted, in the interests of ensuring that 'applicants have an equal chance of competing for the selection - no candidate shall be able to improve his/her chance of success by spending more than other applicants on their campaign'.

Ordering of candidates

Often the ordering of candidates is determined by a vote of members in the given region.

The Labour selection board presents a shortlist comprising re-selected MEPs and new candidates to a postal ballot of members. The ordering is determined by 'simple preference voting'. Green Party members cast preferences for candidates. The candidate securing first place on the list is determined by an Alternative Vote count. Subsequent places are determined by an Single Transferable Vote (STV) count. The Liberal Democrat Party uses STV.

One variation in practice is between presenting members with short or long lists to vote upon. For instance Conservative members were presented with a list of candidates corresponding to the number of seats in any particular region, the members simply being required to rank these candidates; while by contrast the Green Party byelaws allow for there being more nominees than places to be filled. Liberal Democrat rules state that 'A shortlist shall normally comprise more than the number of seats up for election in that Euro Region but no more than twice that number'.

Some parties, including the Liberal Democrat Party, opt to have the votes counted by the Electoral Reform Society, an independent body.

ConservativeHome made the following complaint about the Conservative voting process:

The voting process was complex and restrictive. The system was not STV but a unique system devised by CCHQ that saw every vote weighted. Maybe they were inspired by the esteemed Eurovision Song Contest? Grassroots members fortunate enough to receive a ballot paper - and there is anecdotal evidence that huge numbers did not - were required to vote for every candidate. For the reasons given immediately above this was very difficult as it was very difficult to distinguish between candidates. We suspect that there was a lot of 'donkey voting' with people putting numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 etc in a simple alphabetical order. Any voter that failed to give a number to every candidate would have had their whole ballot paper disqualified. This system was perfectly designed for evening out voter preferences - a vote for a strongly preferred candidate wasn't worth much more than one for someone the voter didn't want to rank at all.

Miscellaneous

Timetables vary. The BNP announced that it was seeking candidates as late as 4 December 2008, with interviews applications due in by 5 January and interviews to be held in the same month. Green Party byelaws recommend that each Regional Party 'complete its selection procedure at least 12 months prior to...the expected opening date for nominations for the European election'. The broad timetable of the Liberal Democrat Party was that applications should be received by 2 July 2007, regional selection committees to announce shortlists by the end of August, hustings to be held in every region in October, and polls to close on 7 November.

Clearly selection procedures are not simply determined by the formal rules governing them. Party membership as a whole is in long-term decline in the UK and as a consequence networks of activists are relatively small. Views on particular candidates can be rapidly and informally transmitted through these groups. An important development here is the rise of the internet. As suggested by the activities of ConservativeHome, it enables members more easily to discuss both candidates (including monitoring the voting record of sitting MEPs) and the process used to select them.

The possible influence of European parliamentary groups and parties

The influence of the MEPs from a particular national party group upon the selection processes of their party is difficult to measure. It might be argued that, generally speaking, MEPs would favour a degree of incumbent protection. If a central party introduces such provision, it is likely that it has done so at least in part as a consequence of pressure from MEPs. The incumbent protection used by Labour and the Conservatives can be seen in this light.

One the other hand, national party groups of MEPs may not be entirely harmonious and some members of them could favour processes which expose colleagues they dislike to de-selection.

The Liberal Democrat approach reflects the circumstance that often, and perhaps particularly for parties smaller than the big two, sitting MEPs are able to achieve a profile which others cannot challenge, whether their position is formally safeguarded or not. However, it is possible for MEPs to achieve a negative profile with party members - as seems to have been the case for some at least of the Conservative Party MEPs. There is some reason to suppose that procedural mechanisms were resorted to by the Conservative Party as a means of protecting existing MEPs

in the reselection procedure. But, as the reaction of ConservativeHome demonstrates, such interventions have a political price.

It is difficult to detect substantial influence from broader pan-European parties or parliamentary groups upon selection procedure. Generally procedures are influenced more by national party considerations. Some of them are organisational: for instance the Labour Party, with its historic roots as the political wing of the broader labour movement, provides a role for affiliated organisations. Others are ideological, for instance the attitude of particular parties towards seeking candidates from particular minority groups.

Of the parties considered here a number are critical or hostile in their attitude towards European integration in general and/or the EU in particular (see Appendix One). Therefore, while they might participate in a group in the European Parliament, they are probably not disposed towards European-wide concerted action in the matter of candidate selection, nor would they wish to be perceived in this light. For the Conservatives, membership of the European People's Party Parliamentary Group at Strasbourg was anyway a controversial issue, which may have had an influence on the selection process used, and was certainly seen as doing so by some activist members, as discussed above.

While it is critical of the EU as presently constituted, the party with the most explicit pan-European outlook towards the selection of European parliamentary candidates is the Green Party. Since voters in Gibraltar now participate in the UK European elections, the Green Party provides for the Gibraltar Greens to have representation on candidate lists in the region where they are represented. Membership of a recognised European Green Party counts as part of the period of continuous membership (normally one year) required to be considered as a candidate.

Conclusions

There is a clear connection between the ideological stance of a party and its selection processes. Attitudes towards diversity influence the approach taken to encouraging possible candidates to come forward; and may prompt the use of the legislative opt-out under sex discrimination legislation. The Green Party, the Liberal Democrats, Labour and now the Conservatives all emphasise this approach. The attainment of more diverse lists of candidates may be seen as a presentational as well as ideological end, since parties such as Labour and the Conservatives both wish to be seen as inclusive and appeal to diverse voters.

It can reasonably be inferred that individuals hoping to achieve selection will not diverge openly and substantially from the stated European policy of their parties, though in some cases there may be subtle attempts to communicate nuances to voters. Of the six parties assessed here, four can be regarded as hostile either to the integration project as a whole or the current form it has taken. They are the Green Party, the Conservatives (both against the current form of the EU) and UKIP and the BNP (advocating withdrawal.); Labour and the Liberal Democrats present themselves as broadly favourable to the current structures and policies of the European Union. .

The organisational traditions and practices of a party can have a significant affect upon its selection processes. For instance, in the case of the Labour Party, the trades union movement has a specified role. Parties such as the Liberal Democrat Party and the Green Party which have a highly decentralised organisational tradition, give this tradition clear expression in their

selection rules. The Conservative tradition of ‘deference’ can arguably be seen as having influenced their approach to sitting MEPs, although it is a tradition challenged by an increasingly non-deferential activist base. The BNP appears to adhere to a principle of personal leadership, by the Chairman.

Parties have similar qualifying requirements for possible candidates. They can include party membership for a minimum period, willingness to abide by party rules, and basic skills such as being able to handle the media and knowledge of relevant political issues, as well as campaigning experience.

Regional committees are often used as mediating bodies, acting as a filter between those who come forward and the final shortlists. These bodies can be seen as possessing power in the sense that they can potentially exclude those they deem unsuitable from short-lists; and they may have a role in decisions over the handling of incumbents. They also often have a significant role in ensuring diversity upon shortlists.

Party members have a reasonable degree of power over the selection process for the European Elections in that they often determine the ordering of lists. This power may be circumscribed by the use of incumbent protection. If incumbents are automatically placed at the top of the list, as they were for the Conservative Party, members only have an influence on who will become MEPs if MEPs have stood down or been rejected by re-selection processes, or if their party wins more seats than it did in the previous election (or if it loses some but not all of them).

Parties may take measures to ensure that campaigning takes place – stipulating, for instance, that hustings events should occur - but at the same time seek to regulate it, through strict rules over such activities as mailouts. The apparent Conservative attempt to restrict campaigning was an exceptional stance, presumably prompted by particular tensions within the party. However, the regulation of campaigning generally is becoming increasingly difficult because of the use of the internet.

A substantial impact from national party groups in the European Parliament or from pan-European parties or parliamentary groups is difficult to detect – and it is hard to see how it could be exercised to great effect.

If party activists feel – rightly or wrongly – that they are being sidelined in any process they are likely to voice disgruntlement. Electronic communications make such activity relatively easy. For instance, ConservativeHome alleged that there their process was controlled by a clique of pro-integrationists, designed to bypass ‘grassroots’ members. It complained that:

John Maples [MP, head of the Candidates’ Department] was responsible for candidate selection as well as being the returning officer. The two roles should have been separated. John Maples is both on the Euro enthusiast wing of the Conservative Party and wants to diminish grassroots involvement in candidate selection. It would have been much better if a more neutral figure had been appointed to oversee the process. As returning officer he has the powers he needs to suppress evidence about the consequences of the decisions he took as head of candidates and he's certainly using those powers.

The website quoted one of its correspondents in the following terms:

We may claim the language of localism transparency and accountability, but we do not show those virtues in our internal affairs. The only conclusion I can reach is that, if we return to government, when we face a difficulty, our instincts will be to control, to centralise and to disenfranchise.

CROATIA

Introduction

This study outlines the procedures that are expected to be applied by Croatian political parties to establish their electoral lists or other means of selecting candidates for the European elections. Also, the possible impact of the European political parties and the political groups in the European Parliament on such procedures is examined.

According to the Enlargement Strategy, it should be possible to reach the final stage of accession negotiations with Croatia by the end of 2009.⁵⁸¹ The Government estimates that Croatia will enter the EU well before 2014.⁵⁸² Therefore, although Croatian political parties will not be able to take part in 2009 European Parliament elections, it is expected that they will join after signing the accession treaty: first as observers and later, following the ratification of the accession treaty, as members of the European Parliament.

Taking into account Croatia's candidate status the method of the study has been adjusted. The parties presented in the national parliament having won more than 2% of the popular vote in the last national election, that were held on 25 November 2007, were the basis for the study. These are:

- Croatian Democratic Union - HDZ, which won 34. 91% votes
- Social Democratic Party - SDP, which won 32.50% votes
- Croatian People's Party -Liberal Democrats - HNS that won 7.05%
- Croatian Peasant Party - HSS and Croatian Social Liberal Party - HSLS whose coalition won 6. 77% votes.⁵⁸³

The starting hypothesis of the study was that parties of the ruling coalition (HDZ, HSS/HSLS) are prepared for the participation in elections for the European Parliament. The hypothesis was formulated based on the fact that the Government adopted draft Law on elections to the European Parliament in Croatia in June 2008.

Thus, the starting point was analysis of the draft law. Next, party statutes and rules of procedures were examined. This was followed by interviews with officials of parties included in the study. The interviews helped to collect relevant information on current activities.

The abovementioned parties were informed about the project and were asked to provide their view on necessary changes of their statutes and applicable procedures. The parties were rather slow in answering, indicating that, despite awareness that changes are needed, the activities are lacking. After several contacts and explanations, reiterating the purpose and the scope of the study, by the end of 2008 all but one (HNS) of included parties provided written answers. The answers describe the general selection procedure, indicate necessary changes of the statute and focus on cooperation with political groups in the European Parliament.

⁵⁸¹ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2008-2009, Brussels, 5.11.2008, COM(2008) 674 final, p. 11

⁵⁸² E.g. Prime Minister Sanader, 25 September 2008., available at http://www.vlada.hr/hr/naslovnica/novosti_i_najave/2008/rujan/predsjednik_vlade_odbacio_navode_u_ulas_ku_hrvatske_u_eu_2014, last access 30 January 2009

⁵⁸³ State electoral commission, available from <http://www.izbori.hr>

Current situation and necessary changes

Relevant legislation

The Government adopted final draft Law on elections to the European Parliament in Croatia in June 2008. The draft Law is based on the Act concerning the elections of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage and the Council Directive 93/109/EC of 6 December 1993 laying down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament for citizens of the Union residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals. In July the Parliament also adopted new Act on gender equality⁵⁸⁴ which regulates the way the lists are established from the perspective of equal representation of men and women.

The **Law on elections to the European Parliament in Croatia** will regulate who has the right to vote for Croatian members of the European Parliament and who has the right to run for the European Parliament, while the number of Croatian members of the European Parliament will be determined in the accession treaty. The Croatian government estimates that there will be 12 or 13 Croatian MEPs. The act provides for electoral procedure, the rules for submitting an application to stand as a candidate, rules regarding the electoral campaign and outlines financing rules; it defines procedures for withdrawal of the mandate and for filling vacant seats; it identifies duties that are incompatible with the office of the member of the European Parliament. The duties of the state election commission, election commissions at the local level (counties, municipalities and districts), electoral boards and those of the Constitutional Court are also defined. The draft law provides for establishment of ethics commission and also for monitoring of elections by non-governmental organizations. Transitory and final provisions (Draft Law, Articles 80-86) deal with the first elections of the members of the European Parliament.

Croatia would not be able to participate in elections for the European Parliament before ratification of the Act of Accession. In the period from the signing of the Association Treaty to the actual and formal accession to the European Union, the Croatian Parliament will appoint observers. The number of observers shall be defined by the Act of Accession. The seats will be allocated to the parliamentary parties based on their share of seats in the Croatian Parliament. On the day of Croatia's accession, the observers will become interim members of the European Parliament. The mandate in the Croatian Parliament of observers and interim members will be put on hold,⁵⁸⁵ while their mandate in the European Parliament will end by the date of the first elections to the European Parliament.

The status of observers/interim members appointed by the outgoing Croatian Parliament shall cease upon appointing the new observers by the new Croatian Parliament.

With regards to provisions that are to be defined in accordance with specific national situation, the Government proposed that the members of the European Parliament shall be elected on the

⁵⁸⁴ Official gazette, 82/2008, July 2008

⁵⁸⁵The final proposal of the Government provided exemption to the incompatibility rule for the observers. The Legislative Committee of the Parliament indicated that the exemption should not be granted and proposed amendments accordingly.

basis of proportional representation, using the list system and also enabling a preferential vote. The political parties registered in Croatia can propose a list, while independent candidates have to collect 3000 signatures from voters. Croatian territory and electoral places outside Croatia is one electoral area. A minimum threshold for the allocation of seats is set at 5% of votes cast (Draft Law, Article 32).

Allocation of seats for European Parliament members among lists is managed on governmental level, using the D'Hondt method. Preferential votes for individual candidates are considered provided that the number of preferential votes for individual candidates is at least 10% of the total number of votes that list received. The candidate who wins majority of preferential votes is elected. If two or more candidates win the same number of preferential votes, ranking on the list is decisive (Article 33). Rules on preferential voting are expected to have significant impact on the Croatian political scene. The application of d'Hondt method for allocation of a small number of seats is likely to create significant bias towards the biggest parties. This could foster democratic consolidation of Croatian political scene around conservative, social-democrat and liberal ideas.⁵⁸⁶

Next, the Draft Law extends rules relation to incompatibility to the number of officials that are subject to the Conflict of Interest Act. According to the proposal submitted to the Croatian Parliament, the observers to the European Parliament were exempt from the incompatibility rule. The Legislative Committee of the Croatian Parliament amended this provision, stipulating that the observers also have special status, and the incompatibility rule should be applied. That means that observers in the European Parliament should not be active members of the Croatian Parliament.⁵⁸⁷

The debate on Draft Law on elections to the European Parliament in Croatia has been focused on two issues that are especially challenging: (i) whether the draft law is in line with the Constitution and (ii) whether it is in line with the EU acquis.

The Committee for the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System of the Croatian Parliament examined whether the draft law is in line with Constitution. The Committee concluded that it was and recommended adoption of law on the summary procedure. This means that the first and second readings are combined: in the same reading, amendments have to be both discussed and decided on.⁵⁸⁸

A dissenting opinion was that the draft proposal was not in line with the Constitution, since the Constitution regulates only rules concerning election of the members of the bodies in Republic of Croatia and grants voting rights only to Croatian citizens. The draft law provides voting rights for the body outside Croatia (i.e. The European Parliament) and also provides voting rights to the citizens of EU states, residents of Croatia. These arguments indicate that the Constitution has to be changed.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁶ Croatia and elections for the European Parliament, Davor Gjenero, Vjesnik daily 31.5.2008.

⁵⁸⁷ Report of the Legislative Committee, available from <http://www.sabor.hr/Default.aspx?art=2336>

⁵⁸⁸ The Parliament's Standing Orders enable a law that is being adjusted to the acquis to be passed in urgent procedure.

⁵⁸⁹ C.f. GONG available from www.gong.hr, also HINA news agency, July 2008. Note: GONG is a non governmental organization with focus on activities to encourage citizens to actively participate in political processes.

Next, the European Integration Committee of the Croatian Parliament raised the issue of alignment with the *acquis*. The Committee did not adopt a position whether the law was in line with *acquis* or not (4 votes “for”, 3 “against” and 1 “sustained”). The discussion of the Committee was focused on the provisions that provide the right to vote and stand as a candidates to Croatian citizens with double citizenship (Croatian and a citizenship of non-EU member county), who do not reside in Croatia nor in the EU member states. Two questions are related with this provision: first, whether it represents discrimination on the grounds of nationality, which is incompatible with Article 12 of the Treaty of the European Union, as the citizens of the EU member states have to reside in Croatia in order to exercise the right to vote (Draft law, Article 5), while Croatian citizens without residence in Croatia can vote under the same conditions as Croatian citizens with residence. The second issue relates to alignment with Directive 93/109/EC (Article 9 2 b), which requires that a Community voter shall produce a formal declaration stating that he will exercise his right to vote in the member state of residence only.⁵⁹⁰

The draft law is important from the perspective of institution-building. In Croatia, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and European Integration is charged with preparing the decision makers for the role that they have in the integration process. On the other hand, though, because of the desire for quick legal adjustment, the Parliament’s Standing Orders enable a law that is being adjusted to the *acquis* to be passed in the “summary procedure”. According to the Government’s Standing Orders all laws the Government proposes have to be adjusted with EU *acquis*. As a result, the Government can seek the urgent procedure for every single law that it proposes.

The Government submitted draft law on elections to the European Parliament in Croatia to the Parliament and proposed that the law should be passed in summary procedure. The draft was included in the Agenda on 2 July 2008, and its adoption was foreseen by summary procedure. However, following the debate (concluded on 10 July 2008), the Parliament decided, upon Government proposals, discussion in the first reading. On 15 July 2008 the Parliament issued a conclusion⁵⁹¹ indicating that it accepted the draft law.⁵⁹² All the suggestions, proposals and opinions are to be referred to the Government which should prepare a final draft.

Most of the laws the Government proposes are adopted by summary procedure. Application of regular procedure has become exception, rather than a rule. Thus, the fact that the Draft Law was not adopted by summary procedure indicates that the Government has acknowledged and accepted the need to improve draft, which might be important step towards better lawmaking.

In addition, according to the new **Act on gender equality**, adopted in June 2008, balanced gender representation in electoral list is required (Article 15). The Act defines rules aimed at promoting equal treatment of men and women in political parties. Balanced representation is achieved if the gender gap is not greater than 20% (e.g. 60:40) - share of women must gradually increase and reach minimal requirements (40%) by the third regular elections following the date of entry into force of the law.

⁵⁹⁰ For more see <http://pravo-eu.Blogspot.com/2008/07/izbozi-za-europski-parlament-u.html>

⁵⁹¹ Parliamentary conclusions establish positions on specific events and circumstances.

⁵⁹² Croatian Parliament, available at <http://www.sabor.hr/Default.aspx?art=23086>

The legal framework that is being developed has significant shortcomings related to issues of double citizenship and voting rights, lack of transparency and coordination in the process of preparation of draft law⁵⁹³, underdeveloped rules on financial control and also the selection procedure for appointment of observers/interim members of the European Parliament. Still, the electoral model for European elections represents an important step forward in decision-making procedure: first, Government's decision (approved by the Parliament) to apply regular procedure, can be regarded as an important step towards better lawmaking; second, it provides for preferential vote and third, it provides for gender equality.

Level of preparedness of political parties

Introduction

Based on the Draft law (and respecting provisions on gender equality) political parties define lists and decide upon the ranking of the candidates based on the statute or special statutory provision. In this part of the study, we examine

- whether and how the statutes of the Croatian Democratic Union – HDZ, Social Democratic Party- SDP, Croatian People's Party- Liberal Democrats – HND, Croatian Peasant Party -HSS and Croatian Social Liberal Party -HSLS define procedures for establishing electoral lists and
- whether statutory changes are necessary.

Next, based on the communication with the parties, the level of awareness about necessary changes is examined, along with the possible impact of the European political parties and political groups in the European Parliament.

Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ)

The statute of the Croatian Democratic Union Statute (HDZ)⁵⁹⁴ defines that HDZ performs its activities on the territory of Croatia and also abroad, in line with the rulebook adopted by the Central Committee of the HDZ and in line with legal provisions of the country in which HDZ is active. Despite the fact that the HDZ is organised on regional principles, the decision making is centralised: the Presidency defines election strategy, the General Assembly adopts and amends the Statute, while the Central Committee decides on the membership of international organisations.

The Statute defines procedures concerning local elections and election of the members of the Croatian Parliament. It does not contain explicit provisions regarding procedures for the selection of candidates for the European Parliament, but the Presidency can define election strategy and the Central Committee might adopt a rulebook defining the procedure. According to Mr Gordan Jandroković, member of Croatian Democratic Union Presidency and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the party is actively engaged in preparations for EU membership at all levels and the members of the HDZ will be fully prepared for participation in the EP and its committees by Croatian elections for the European parliament. All necessary

⁵⁹³ According to GONG; the state electoral commission, which is relevant for implementation, was not consulted during preparation of the draft law

⁵⁹⁴ Consolidated version, available at <http://www.hdz.hr/default.aspx?id=16>

changes of the Statute will also be made. However, with regards how and who will prepare members and which changes are necessary, Mr Jandroković's answer is limited to activities in the "various bodies of EPP as associated member". HDZ has been an associate member of EPP since 2004.

The programme of the HDZ also indicates that the EU membership is priority, but it does not outline planned measures. Thus, it seems that the HDZ is confident that it will be ready for the European Parliament, but has not yet defined whether it will change its statute or apply existing procedures.

Social Democratic Party (SDP)

According to the Social Democratic Party Statute (SDP)⁵⁹⁵, the SDP may perform its activities within the territory of Republic of Croatia. The rules for selection of the candidates on the national level are defined (Statute, Article 38). Principal Committee, acting on the proposal of the president of the Party selects the candidates for the parliament. According to the information from SDP⁵⁹⁶ the rules for selection of candidates for the European Parliament are likely to be similar to those defining participation at national level. However, such rules cannot be applied unless the Statute is changed in order to enable performing activities outside Croatia.

The Convention, the highest political body of the SDP can amend Statute. Changes are discussed every four years, before elections of SDP officials. The last changes were introduced in 2008. SDP is associate member of the Party of European Socialists (PES).

Croatian People's Party – Liberal Democrats (HNS)

The statute of the Croatian People's Party – Liberal Democrats (HNS) defines that HNS performs its activities within the territory of the Republic of Croatia (Article 4).⁵⁹⁷ The Statute defines procedure for the selection of candidates to the national parliament. The Central Committee decides on participation in international organisations (Article 7 and Article 54). HNS is active member of ELDR. Ms Vesna Pusić, President of the Parliamentary Club of the HNS is Vice-President of ELDR. The Croatian People's Party – Liberal Democrats foster alliances and cooperation between liberal parties from the region and the EU. It is expected that ELDR procedures might have influence on HNS procedures.

Croatian Peasant Party (HSS)

The Statute of the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS)⁵⁹⁸ provides for establishment of organisational units of HSS abroad (Article 63). It defines that Croatian citizens, members of HSS, that do not reside in Croatia can establish branches of HSS abroad. They have to be committed to HSS's goals, set in Croatia, and respect the rules of the host country. The Party Main Committee, upon a proposal from the Presidency, establishes the list for the Croatian Parliament and other electoral lists (Article 79), such as the European Parliaments.

⁵⁹⁵ Statut Socijaldemokratske partije, http://www.sdp.hr/ljudi_i_politike/statut

⁵⁹⁶ Karolina Levaković, International Secretary of SDP

⁵⁹⁷ Available at <http://www.hns.hr/modules/statut/>

⁵⁹⁸ Statut Hrvatske seljačke stranke, http://www.hss.hr/onama_stat.php

Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) applied for accession to European People's Party (EPP) in 2000, being the first applicant from Croatia. It became an observer in October 2002 and associate member in September 2007. The International Secretary of the HSS, Mr Till, considers that the associated membership is a result of internal reforms within the party. He also expects that full membership of EPP is likely to have a significant impact on development of cooperation among Croatian parties, members of the EPP, at national and European level, both.

Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSLS)

The Statute of the Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSLS)⁵⁹⁹ defines that HSLS performs its activities within the territory of Croatia (Article 5). Upon a proposal from the Presidency, the Central Council of the HSLS establishes a list of candidates and potential representatives in the Croatian Parliament⁶⁰⁰. Central Council decides on membership of international political and non-political organisations. Thus, the Central Council is likely to have an important role in the selection of candidates for European Parliament.

Current preparations for the EU membership in HSLS are focused on education (of activist and officials) and cooperation with the liberal parties in the EU. HSLS is a member of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR) and has established cooperation with the ALDE group in the European Parliament. According to the Vice-President of HSLS, Dražen Berglec, activities within the ALDE group are expected to be relevant for HSLS and are reflected in HSLS's domestic and European policies.

HSLS was the only party in the study that explicitly stated that there are no direct preparations for the selection of candidates in the European Parliament.

Conclusions

The overview shows that the current statutes (with the exception of the HSS) do not contain explicit provisions relevant for elections for the European Parliament. Changes are also necessary to enable activities on the territory of the European Union. The interviews with the party officials indicate that parties mostly consider that it is premature to start administrative preparations for the elections. Still, all of them have established international cooperation and association with related European parties, and have engaged in workshop and training for party leadership and activist's in order to get familiar with the procedures and work of the EU institutions, including the European Parliament.

With regard to the progress of negotiations, it is reasonable to believe that parties will be ready for participation in European elections, following the ratification of the Act of Accession.

HSS and maybe HDZ (depending on interpretation) do not need to change the Statute in order to participate in the European elections. This is in line with the starting hypothesis that the leading coalition (HDZ, HSS/HSLS) is formally better prepared for participation at the European elections than opposition parties. Table 1 summarises current state of preparedness for European elections.

⁵⁹⁹ Statut HSLS-a, <http://www.hsls.hr/?str=dokumenti&sub=statut>

⁶⁰⁰ Članak 58. Statuta HSLS-a

Table 1 Current state of preparedness for European elections

	Statute		Changes planned activities	Cooperation with EU parties	
	Activities outside Croatia	Provisions applicable for EP elections		EPP member	PES member
HDZ	Enabled	? (depending on interpretation)	Declared, not defined		
SDP	No	None	Regular statutory changes		
HNS	No	None	/	ELDR member	
HSS	Enabled	In place	Expected input from EPP	EPP member	associate member
HSLS	No	None	Education, support for partner parties	ELDR member, cooperation ALDE	

Further, it is expected that European political parties could have a significant impact on activities in Croatia and the EU, both. The research proved that Croatian political parties are aware of emerging challenges, but the level of preparedness and integration strategies differ. The majority of parties will have to change their Statutes in order to perform activities in the EU. Based on the current status and timeframe for the first European Parliament elections to be held in Croatia, it seems that Croatian political parties will be prepared for the election of representatives for the European Parliament.

Conclusions

The legal framework necessary for participation in the European elections, is being gradually established. Identified challenges relate to issues of double citizenship and voting rights, lack of transparency and coordination in the process of preparation of draft law and prevalence of political over expert opinion regarding improvements of electoral laws.

Also, rules on financial control are underdeveloped as well as selection procedure for appointment of observers/interim members of the European Parliament.

On the other hand, preferential vote and gender equality rules might be helpful in consolidation of democracy. Next, the Government's decision (approved by the Parliament) to apply regular procedure, which is rather rare in Croatia, can be regarded as an important step towards better lawmaking.

Political parties, from their side, are not ready for participation in the European Parliament elections yet. Most of them have to change their Statutes in order to enable activities on the level of the EU. Five parties that have been analysed have established formal links with European political parties and are ready to support them in the election campaigns and are aware of the need for harmonisation of policies, especially following the entry into the EU.

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