ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

The Routledge Handbook of European Elections explores the multifaceted dimension of the European Parliament's (EP) electoral contests across the European Community and European Union since 1979.

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- an overview of all EP and national elections;
- an in-depth analysis of the 2009 EP electoral race;
- an overall theoretical interpretation of European elections.

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The volume aims to enhance readers' understanding of the European Parliament and revive their interest in the European integration process. By providing a wide range of national and European facts and figures, this investigation represents a comprehensive reference guide to scholars, practitioners, and students of the European Parliament, European elections, political parties, European Union and comparative politics.

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ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

Edited by Donatella M. Viola

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2015
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
[CIP data]

ISBN: 978-0-415-59203-1 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-71531-5 (ebk)

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Typeset in Bembo Std
by Swales & Willis Ltd, Exeter, Devon, UK

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To my dearest mother Natalina Scambia

In loving memory of my father Francesco Viola
(15 October 1922–31 March 2010)

Never to forget the heroism and courage of our fathers who fought for peace, freedom and democracy, values too often taken for granted and undermined by our generation. . . .

'Thy self thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.' (Shakespeare, Sonnet I)

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'. . . E tu onore di pianti, Ettore, avrai,
ovefia santo e lagrimato il sangue
per la patria versato, e finché il Sole
risplenderà su le sciagure umanee'
'I Sepolcri', Ugo Foscolo

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FOREWORD

Why should one care about European Parliament elections?

This volume comes at an opportune time. The story of direct elections to the European Parliament has, after all, been a sorry narrative, with continued decline of voter interest, however brave a face one tries to put on it.

The elections to the European Parliament in 2014 have, however, the potential to be a watershed in the evolution of European democracy – so this is a suitable moment to take stock of European elections so far – a task admirably accomplished in this volume. The importance of these elections will be tested in the 2019 elections. The seeds sown this time round may begin to bear fruit then.

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It is a virtue of this project that it understands that Europe in general, and the machinations of European democracy in particular, can only be understood by close attention to the specificities of the national – Member State – context. In this respect Europe is more federal, in the true sense of the word, than many federal states properly so called. In fact, the focus on the national context of European elections, up to and including the 2014 elections, helps to highlight the deepest pathologies of European democracy.

How so? At the heart of democracy there is choice: the people get to choose a 'who' and a 'how'. Who will govern? He from the left or, perhaps she from the right? And how will one be governed, with austerity or growth? One-party democracy, even with free elections, is no democracy at all, since there is no choice.

But likewise, a Parliament such as the EP with full legislative powers embedded, however, in a governance structure which does not allow this primordial choice will be a very flawed democracy. The result will be a Parliament with considerable legislative and supervisory powers and little political authority.

After many 'ostrich years', the European head is finally coming out of the sand: there really is a problem with the legitimacy – or rather, the perception of legitimacy – of the European construct. It is not a mere 'bee in the bonnet' of some irritating academics disconnected from reality. Eurobarometer indications are at present at their lowest and the results of a highly respected Pew Center survey, too, show a remarkable fall in support for Europe among its citizens. Political differences on how to tackle the Eurocrisis are, worryingly, both reflective and constitutive of what one may call a solidarity deficit.

Even if the EU manages to make substantive and substantial strides in the construction of the much-vaunted Banking Union, or the new buzzword the 'Securities Market Union', it is not

expected that any of the above will change significantly. The dramatic increase in the anti-European vote and the mainstreaming effect it has had on general politics are a sharp reminder of this.

It used to be denied, in both political and academic circles, that Europe still suffered from a democracy deficit. The usual trope that was trotted out to defend the democratic credentials of the Union was the historic increase in the powers of the European Parliament, which, even before the Lisbon Treaty, could credibly be called a veritable co-legislator with the Council. However, even the most devout Europhiles in the 'Amen Corner' of the Union cannot wish away another historical trend establishing an ironic parallel with the development of the European Parliament: the more powers it has gained, the greater popular indifference toward it seems to have developed, as is evidenced in this volume. The decline is in voter support as measured in voter participation to EP elections. The turnout rate has declined persistently from election to election ever since 1979, by reaching historical lows in many Member States, as well as for the Union as a whole, at the 2009 elections. The decline seems to have been arrested in 2014, but paradoxically that might be a result of anti-Europe mobilization. The figures are even more depressing if one excludes from the calculus those Member States in which there is obligatory voting.

The classic historical explanation – voter indifference to a chamber without powers – naturally has no longer any purchase and has disappeared. The alternative explanation usually dished out by hard-working if anguished MEPs, who are both humiliated and flummoxed by this historical trend, is to say in a million different ways that 'we have to explain Europe better' to European citizens. This was the initial line which the Commission also took after the debacle of the Constitution. It is a morally repugnant argument, a crass resurrection in all but name of Marxist false consciousness. Maybe we should change the stupid people who do not understand – as Bertolt Brecht famously and viciously quipped? To say that people do not turn out to vote for the EP because they do not understand how important such a vote is, is both wrong and contemptuous of the very democracy on which these elections are predicated.

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But in fact the people are as wise as their elected representatives in the European Parliament and elsewhere. For they intuit the truth: with all its increased powers it still makes little systemic difference to Europe, and in Europe, whether and how the people vote for the European Parliament. The problem is not the quality of parliamentarians – which is the same as in national politics, ranging from the superb to the laughable – nor scandals or gravy trains or anything of the sort. It is, I believe, and as I have argued *ad nauseam*, structural, deriving from the very design of governance in the EU.

In essence, the two primordial features of any functioning democracy are missing: the grand principles of accountability and representation.

As regards accountability, even the basic condition of representative democracy – that at election time the citizens can choose their governors – does not operate in Europe. Neither does the concomitant power to have one's vote, if part of the majority party, have a decisive influence on who will govern.

In a similar vein, it is impossible to link – in any meaningful, systematic way – the results of elections to the European Parliament to the performance of the political groups within the preceding parliamentary session, in the way that is part of the mainstay of political accountability within Member States. Structurally, dissatisfaction with 'Europe' has no channel to affect, at the European level, the agents of European governance.

Likewise, at the most primitive level of democracy, there is simply no moment in the civic calendar of Europe when the citizen can influence directly the outcome of any policy choice facing the Community and Union in the way that citizens can when choosing between parties which offer more or less sharply distinct programmes at the national level. The political colour

of the European Parliament only very weakly gets translated into the legislative and administrative output of the Union. The regular gentlemanly habit of switching EP Presidents and governance of Parliament midway is a mockery of politics and democracy.

The 'political deficit', to use the felicitous phrase of Renaud Dehousse, is at the core of the democracy deficit. The Commission, by its self-understanding, linked to its very ontology, can not be 'partisan' in a right–left sense; nor can the Council, by virtue of the haphazard political nature of its composition.

Democracy surely must have some meaningful mechanism for expression of voter preference predicated on choice among options, typically informed by stronger or weaker ideological orientation. That is an indispensable component of politics. Democracy without politics is an oxymoron. And yet, that is not only Europe, but also a defining feature of Europe, the 'non-partisan' nature of the Commission, that is celebrated. The stock phrase that the supranational Commission vindicates the European interest, whereas the intergovernmental Council is a clearing house for Member State interests, is, at best, naïve. Does the 'European interest' not necessarily involve political and ideological choices?

The two most primordial norms of democracy, the principle of accountability and the principle of representation are compromised in the very structure and process of the Union.

Against these structural defects in European accountability and representation it should surprise no one, least of all Members of the European Parliament, that voter turnout is in decline, reaching historical lows. European citizens are not stupid after all.

Europe's historic choice – and risk

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The political outcome of the 2014 elections offers for the very first time the prospect of meaningful change. The idea had been in the books for decades, but good ideas that remain in books are just such. They collect dust together with the books which contain them. So credit must go to the outgoing and incoming President of Parliament and others alongside him who had taken the bold step to transform the recent elections.

The idea was simple: at the elections to the European Parliament voters will effectively choose the next President of the Commission. It would be impossible – it was argued – with a measure of hope and defiance, for the European Council to override such choice 'by the people' and impose one of their back-room, non-transparent, rabbit-out-of-the-hat choices on Europe. And so it turned out!

The potential importance for European democracy of this development is as great or greater than anything proposed in the defunct Constitution. Interestingly and significantly, this happened without any changes to the current treaties, demonstrating, yet again, the primacy of politics over law.

Parliament vastly overplayed the strength of its legal and political arguments for this change. The argument based on Article 17 that the European Council is *obligated* to follow the parliamentary choice was overstated both as a matter of law and as a matter of politics. This Article allows the Parliament to block all proposals by the Council, but not to impose its candidate. It allows, likewise, the Council to propose but not to impose.

In effect, it recognizes that the European Council and the European Parliament represent, as is common in many federal states, two different forms of democratic legitimation and creates a design which requires the consent of both institutions in the choice of the President. Either institution has the legal power to block the process, but not to impose its choice. It is not a flawless formulation. One could imagine a composition of Parliament in which no candidate proposed by the Council receives the necessary majority. There is no express 'fall back position'

but, on the whole, one can see a certain political wisdom in the procedure of Article 17: The President of the Commission requires legitimation and authority deriving from both 'houses of democracy' which make up the European Union.

In exercising its role of submitting a name to the Parliament, the European Council must take into account the results of the elections. Yet this cannot plausibly be interpreted as 'must follow.' It is clear that by speaking of consultations, and providing for majority voting, the Council is meant to be a deliberative body and not a mere rubber stamp. 'Taking into account' is a soft term and it could, for example, be credibly claimed that simply by nominating someone from the winning party due account has been taken of the elections.

There is certainly no legal duty on the European Council to follow the choice of Parliament, indeed, to suggest such would be to run against what I consider the letter and spirit of the law. Neither institution is meant to be a rubber stamp to the other.

If there was an imperative of the Council to accept the choice of Parliament, it must be a political imperative rather than a legal one. Nonetheless here, too, the issue is not straightforward.

The argument that in the current circumstance of European politics, the Heads of State and government speak with no less democratic legitimacy than the European Parliament is not a specious argument. Given that the leading candidate had an outright victory in only 12 of the Member States and in two others shared the podium with his rival adds poignancy to this point.

Equally, it is a stretch to claim that, other than in a highly formal sense, the European peoples had really indicated any one of the five lead candidates as their choice for the presidency of the Commission. The polls we had at the time these observations are being written are sketchy. However, the common observation that in most jurisdictions the elections remained 'national' and that few electors were casting their vote with a view to who would emerge as President of the Commission must hold a lot of truth. All this compromised the ability of the successful candidate to claim with credibility and with authority 'I was elected by the Peoples of Europe.'

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In my opinion, there was no legal imperative but the reality of the electoral results. A clear victory in less than half the Member States, a low turnout in all except those countries where voting is obligatory, and a sense that the electors had not really turned their mind to the Presidential issue, all suggested that no compelling political imperative was dictated by these results.

So what was the European Council to do? The principled and correct approach was in fact followed and, paradoxically, the opposition of the British Prime Minister David Cameron was instrumental in creating procedural propriety. The European Council had the constitutional right and the duty to consult, take into account the results of the elections, and propose a candidate who enjoyed the support of at least a majority of Council Members, even if that necessitated a formal vote.

The selection of the President of the Commission should be the result of the voice of the peoples speaking through their two channels as provided by the treaty.

That is what they did by following the outcome of the elections and proposing the winning candidate as agreed by Parliament. It was prudent because to do otherwise would inflict huge damage to the image of the European Union, particularly at this moment.

But even more importantly, to follow the *Spitzenkandidaten* exercise logic was a great investment in the future of European democracy. Establishing this precedent will have the potential of transforming the next elections. It will help galvanize moves towards truer pan- European parties and it will create a new dynamic for the choice of future candidates. Above all, it will help Parliament match its formidable legislative powers with appropriate political authority, since the lesson of this outcome will most likely have a significant impact on voter behaviour in five years from now.

It is wise to invest in the economic future of Europe as well as in its democratic future and promise and no one can deny the vast experience that Jean-Claude Juncker will bring to these tasks ahead.

However, the European Union faces a far more consequential choice: Is the logic of the *Spitzenkandidaten* to lead to a Commission which is 'political' but not 'partisan' in an ideological sense, as the outgoing President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso maintains? Or if the people are to be heard and the political choice is to be real, should a 'partisan' Commission no longer be a dirty word? To be sure 'political' is good in the sense of the Commission not allowing itself to descend further into the role of super-secretariat of the other political institutions, but 'partisan'?

In my view, the whole exercise would be nullified if there is no movement, even if subtle or cautious, in that direction. At the heart of democracy there must be choice – not only as to whom should govern us, but as to how we should be governed. The lead candidate exercise, if it is to succeed, can not be perceived as a mere beauty contest. Part of the 'investment in the future' thesis is that, in moving to the next elections, voters must be put in a position whereby their choice is not only directed to the 'who', but also to the 'how' Europe should be governed. Their vote should have an impact on political and ideological programmes. And for that to happen, it must be seen, even if cautiously and prudently, that it makes a difference that the President belongs to the European People's Party rather than the Socialist family. For a Europe habituated to a result-based legitimacy, the adjustment will not be easy and not without costs. Different legitimacy issues will arise, but veritable democracy is political and requires courage. Let's not be afraid.

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5
GERMANY

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Figure 5.1 Map of Germany

Table 5.1 Germany profile

EU entry year	1952 ECSC; 1958 EEC and Euratom Founding Member
Schengen entry year	1985 Original Signatory
MEPs elected in 2009	99
MEPs under Lisbon Treaty	96
Capital	Berlin
Total area*	357,137.2 km^2
Population	81,843,743 Homogenous country with some ethnic minorities and large foreign population Ethnic minorities with special rights • 60,000 Sorben and Wenden • 50,000 Danish minority • 12,000 Friesen • 70,000 Sinti and Roma
Population density**	229.4 km^2
Median age of population	45.0
Political system	Federal republic
Head of state	Horst Köhler, Christian Democratic Union (CDU), (July 2004–May 2010); Christian Wulff, Christian Democratic Union (CDU), (July 2010–Feb 2012); Joachim Gauck, no political affiliation, (March 2012 –)
Head of government	Chancellor Angela Merkel, Christian Democratic Union (CDU), (November 2005-).
Political majority	Christian Democratic Union (CDU)/Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU) and Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) Grand Coalition, (November 2005- October 2009); Christian Democratic Union (CDU)/Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU) and Free Democratic Party (FDP) Government Coalition, (October 2009–December 2013); Christian Democratic Union (CDU)/Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU) and Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) Government Coalition, (December 2013–).
Currency	Euro (€) Member of the Eurozone since 1999
Prohead GDP in PPS	31,300 €

Source: Eurostat 2012, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/.

Notes:
* Total area including inland waters.
** Population Density: the ratio of the annual average population of a region to the land area of the region.

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1 Geographical position

Germany is located in west central Europe, bordered by nine countries: Denmark, Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Its territory, the fourth largest in the European Union, stretches from the North Sea and the Baltic Sea in the north to the Alps in the south. Germany boasts the largest population amongst the EU Member States, with almost 82 million inhabitants, although this figure is declining faster than other European countries due to the low birth rate (Eurostat 2012).

There are four recognized ethnic or cultural minorities which enjoy special political rights under the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law), the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: the Sorbian people in Brandenburg and Saxony, the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein, the Frisians in the northern part of the country, and the Sinti and Roma, estimated at about 70,000, mainly settled in the western part of the country and in Berlin (Federal Ministry of the Interior, 2010). Germany hosts about 6.6 million immigrants, corresponding to 8.2 per cent of the overall population concentrated in the Berlin, Hamburg, and Bremen areas, although it is worth underlining that the immigration flux has been stagnating and even declining over the last few years (*Statistisches Bundesamt*, 2013).

2 Historical background

The defeat of Germany in World War II and the subsequent occupation by the Allied Forces made the country vulnerable to the emerging East–West conflict, which started after 1947. The 'Cold War' inevitably led to the division between the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), under the sphere of influence of the Western allies, and the German Democratic Republic (GDR), under Soviet control. This situation shaped the European foreign policy of the FRG until the fall of the *Berliner Mauer* (Berlin Wall) on 9 November 1989, which had been erected in 1961 by the GDR in order to prevent their citizens fleeing to the West. William Patterson has categorized the early years after the foundation of the FRG as 'pre-sovereign' due to the relevance of the occupying Allied Forces in West Germany (Paterson, 2005, 261). Only after the *Deutschlandvertrag* in 1955, did Germany gain what Peter Katzenstein defined as 'semi-sovereignty' given that the Cold War and the European integration process were major factors limiting the choices of the country (Katzenstein, 1987; see also Paterson, 2005, 261–5).

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On 9 May 1950, under pressure from the United States, the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman announced the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which envisaged reconciliation with West Germany as a key objective in order to realize the process of European integration. West Germany's status as a founding member of the European Community remained an important factor of the identity of the country (Clemens *et al.*, 2008, 97–108). The project also allowed the rebuilding of a new culture within the country, including the so-called 'politics of remembrance' aimed at confronting as well as overcoming the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*). Although the German Constitution was seen as a sort of democratic re-education, it was by no means clear that the West German population was able to match its democratic aspirations (Almond and Verba, 1963). After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, German reunification was deemed possible only within the European integration process, thus creating the conditions for the reunification of the European continent. Article 23 of the Basic Law states that:

> With a view to establishing a united Europe, the Federal Republic of Germany shall participate in the development of the European Union that is committed to democratic, social, and federal principles, to the rule of law, and to the principle of subsidiarity, and that guarantees a level of protection of basic rights essentially comparable to that afforded by this Basic Law. To this end the Federation may transfer sovereign powers by a law with the consent of the *Bundesrat*. The establishment of the European Union, as well as changes in its treaty foundations and comparable regulations that amend or supplement this Basic Law, or make such amendments or supplements possible, shall be subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) of Article 79.

3 Geopolitical profile

Defeat in the World War II represented a major turning point for the foreign policy of Germany and its subsequent division into a Western Federal Republic and an Eastern Democratic Republic after 1949 was a major traumatic experience. Until 1989, both were at the forefront of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. Whilst the former became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1955, the latter joined the Warsaw Pact in 1956. Only after inter-German relations were normalized in the wake of the Basic Treaty of 1972, was the path opened for both German states to enter the United Nations on 18 September 1973.

The fall of the Berlin Wall leading up to reunification allowed the changing of the geopolitical position of the country. Although the new reunified Federal Republic of Germany was very keen to emphasize allegiance to NATO, the Soviet Union was no longer the common enemy after 1991. The reorientation of NATO and the upgrading of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy led to a change in German foreign policy towards a peace policy approach (*Friedenspolitik*). Although German troops were deployed in Kosovo, Macedonia, Afghanistan, and Somalia, their main task was to restore and keep the peace. The self-confidence of German foreign policy became clear when, along with France, former Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer refused to take part in the invasion of Iraq that was proposed and then carried out by the US Bush Administration in 2003 with the 'coalition of the willing' yet without an explicit mandate from the UN Security Council. One of the main reasons for this disagreement stemmed from Germany's socialized and internalized policy of peace and multilateralism, which was widely supported by its population (Bulmahn *et al.*, 2010). This attitude, in line with the mission and vocation of the United Nations, was also appreciated by Third World countries and emerging economies, because it upholds human rights and international law, and contributes to peaceful solutions within a global governance framework. The vigour of German foreign policy has been backed up by its strong economy, giving the country a strong say at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and in the European Union (Guérot and Leonard, 2011, 2). Finally, Germany can be considered as the most prominent member of the Eurozone, thus bearing an enhanced responsibility towards its stability.

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4 Overview of the political landscape

Germany is a federal republic comprised of 16 constituent states, the so-called *Bundesländer*. The Basic Law stipulates in great detail which issues fall within the competence of the federal government and which devolve to the regional states. Most policies are implemented by so-called 'executive federalism', which means that the federal level sets framework laws that are then implemented by the government of the *Bundesländer*. Although federalist elements dominate the states' administration, formulations such as 'unitarian' are used to characterize the German federal state (Hesse, 1962).

The President has only formal representative powers and is elected for a five-year period by a federal assembly consisting of the two chambers of parliament, the lower chamber, *Bundestag,* and the upper chamber, *Bundesrat*, along with selected representatives of society. The *Bundestag*, which represents a 'working parliament' (*Arbeitsparlament*) rather than a 'talking shop' (*Redeparlament*), is the central institution in the German political system. On the eve of the 2009 Euro-election, the President was Horst Köhler, later replaced by Christian Wulff in June 2010 and since 18 March 2012 by Joachim Gauck, a former GDR civil rights activist.

Federal power lies in the hands of the German Chancellor, who has been the Christian Democrat Angela Merkel since 2005. The federal government is accountable to the *Bundestag*, which can issue a motion of censure against it. In this case, however, the opposition has to find not only grounds for denying confidence to the executive, but also to nominate an alternative candidate to replace the Chancellor. The federal government has to take into account the rulings of the Federal Constitutional Court and change legislation accordingly. In the context of the European Union, constitutional complaints (*Verfassungsklagen*) about issues of sovereignty are addressed regularly at the German Federal Constitutional Court. Before the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat* could finally approve the Lisbon Treaty, it was necessary to wait for the ruling of the Federal Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*, 2009). Although Germany's highest court established that the treaty was not fundamentally incompatible with the German Basic Law, it called for a halt to the ratification process until the German Parliament changed domestic law to strengthen the role of the country's legislative bodies in implementing European Union laws. Finally, on 8 September 2009, after the court ruling and the parliamentary adjustment of legislation, the text of the Lisbon Treaty was approved (Müller-Graff, 2010).

5 Brief account of the political parties

Prior to 1983, the Federal Republic of Germany had only a two-and-a-half party system: the *Christlich Demokratische Union/Christlich-Soziale Union,* CDU/CSU (Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union), the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands,* SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany) and the *Freie Demokratische Partei,* FDP (Free Democratic Party). The negative perception of the very fragmented party system during the Weimar Republic and the consequences leading up to Nazi rule set a high value for political stability and moderation of party politics. The Basic Law introduced the principle of a preventive defence of democracy, should any anti-systemic extreme right-wing or left-wing political parties try to enter the political stage. A body called 'Defence of the Constitution' (*Verfassungsschutz*) publishes regular reports on extremist parties and movements at federal and regional levels (Rudzio, 2006, 97).

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On 13 January 1980, the foundation of *Die Grünen* (The Green Party) contributed towards the changing of the traditional political landscape. Emerging in the 1970s out of social movements, the Greens were critical of established politics and wanted a new orientation in terms of economic growth. In 1993, they merged with *Bündnis 90* (Alliance '90/The Green Party), consisting of three non-Communist political groups from former East Germany. Over two decades, the Greens gained an increasing popular consensus, winning at the regional level and entering a coalition government at the federal level together with the Social Democrats under Chancellor Gerhard Schröder between 1998 and 2005 (Viola, 2010).

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, a fifth party loomed on the political horizon, the *Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*, PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism), which was the direct heir to the former *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, SED (Socialist Unity Party), the ruling party in East Germany that had changed its name in the last days of the GDR. Between 1990 and 2006, the party remained exclusively at the regional level and was particularly strong in the new *Bundesländer* of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Brandenburg, Thuringia, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Berlin whilst it was non-existent in the old *Bundesländer.*

In January 2005, a new party called *Arbeit und soziale Gerechtigkeit-Die Wahlalternative*, WASG (Labour and Social Justice-The Electoral Alternative) emerged, comprising of more radical trade union representatives unhappy with the SPD, and small extreme left parties along with members of the German Communist Party, under the leadership of former SPD President and former Minister of Finance, Oskar Lafontaine (Viola, 2010). One of the main grievances

Table 5.2 List of political parties in Germany

Original name	*Abbreviation*	*English translation*
Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands	CDU	Christian Democratic Union
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany
Bündnis 90/Die Grünen		Alliance '90/The Green Party
Freie Demokratische Partei	FDP	Free Democratic Party
Die Linke	DPS	Left Party
Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern	CSU	Christian Social Union of Bavaria
Freie Wähler	FW	Free Voters
Die Republikaner	REP	The Republicans
Mensch-Umwelt-Tierschutz	MUT	Man, Environment, and Animal Protection
Familien-Partei Deutschlands Familie		Family Party of Germany
Piratenpartei Deutschland Piraten		German Pirate Party
Rentner Partei Deutschlands	RENTNER	Pensioners' Party of Germany
Ökologische-Demokratische Partei	ÖDP	Ecological Democratic Party
Deutsche Volksunion	DVU	German People's Union
Rentnerinnen Und Rentner Partei	RPP	Female and Male Pensioners' Party
Feministische Partei-Die Frauen	Die Frauen	Feminist Party – The Women
Partei Bibeltreuer Christen	PBC	Party of Bible-abiding Christians
Bündnis Für Deutschland, Für Demokratie Durch Volksabstimmung Ab Jetz		Association for Germany, for Democracy through Referenda from Now
Das Generationen-Bündnis 50 Plus	50 Plus	Alliance of Generations 50 Plus
Die Grauen		The Greys
Bayernpartei	BP	Bavaria Party
Die Violetten: Für Spirituelle Politik		The Violets: for Spiritual Policy
Gerechtigkeit Braucht Bürgerrechte – Wir Danken Für Ihr Vertrauen! Für Volksentscheide	Wählergemeinschaft	Justice Needs Citizens' Rights – Thanks for your Trust! For People's Decision-Making
Christliche Mitte: Für Ein Deutschland Nach Gottes Geboten	CM	Christian Centre: for a Germany according to God's Commandments
Partei Für Arbeit, Umwelt Und Familie, Christen Für Deutschland	AUF	Party for Labour, Environment and Family Christians for Germany
Aufbruch Für Bürgerrechte, Freiheit Und Gesundheit	AUFBRUCH	New Beginning for Civil Rights, Freedom and Health
Freie Bürger Initiative	FBI	Free Citizens' Initiative
Deutsche Kommunistische Partei	DKP	German Communist Party
Europa-Demokratie-Esperanto	EDE	Europe-Democracy-Esperanto
Bürgerrechtsbewegung Solidarität Büso		Civic Rights Movement Solidarity
Partei Der Sozialen Gleichheit-Sektion Der Vierten Internationale	PSG	Party of Social Equality-Section of the Fourth International
Deutsche Partei	DP	The German Party
Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands	KPD	Communist Party of Germany
Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands	NPD	National Democratic Party of Germany
Partei Des Demokratischen Sozialismus	PDS	Party of Democratic Socialism
Arbeit und soziale Gerechtigkeit – Die Wahlalternative	WASG	Labour and Social Justice – The Electoral Alternative

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was the introduction of labour market reforms called Hartz IV, but also Germany's military engagement in Afghanistan (Jesse and Lang, 2008, 75–81; Hough and Olsen, 2007). The charismatic former SPD politician Oskar Lafontaine, who also joined the WASG, contributed to the achievement of its official representation in regional and national Parliaments. In 2007, a merger between the PDS and the WASG led to the formation of a new political party, which briefly took the name of *Die Linke* (The Left).

This party became a major challenge for the left wing of the SPD. At the 2009 federal elections, the SPD had its worst result ever, declining from 34.2 per cent to 23 per cent, whilst *Die Linke* was able to improve from 8.7 to 11.9 per cent by becoming the fourth largest party in the *Bundestag*, even if it was still ostracized from national government. The party is still ostracized from national government politics.

According to Oskar Niedermayer, the two main conflict cleavages in the German party system are socio-economic and socio-cultural. The former is based on the growing divergence of views on the future of the welfare state and labour market reform. The latter is related to 'survival' materialist values versus 'self-expressive' post-materialist values (Niedermayer, 2007, 118). Traditional cleavages related to religion and class have eroded and a more volatile electorate has emerged, which is difficult for parties to encapsulate. This volatility also led to the considerable electoral decline of the two '*Volksparteien*', the CDU/CSU and the SPD (Saalfeld, 2005, 70).

5.1 Party attitudes towards the European Union

European integration has not been a major dividing line between German political parties. No general disagreement exists about the merits of a project that has been consistently supported by the political elite over the years (Schieder, 2011, 40–7; see also, Bulmer and Paterson, 2010). All political parties can be considered more or less pro-European, even if there are some differences.

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The CDU presents itself as the European party *par excellence* in Germany and its approach is moderate in all policy dimensions, although economic efficiency and competitiveness are quite central. In spite of this, the concept of a 'social market economy' based on economic competitiveness remains a crucial foundation. The CDU sets limits to EU enlargement by offering a 'privileged partnership' with Turkey. Its Bavarian sister party, the CSU, places more emphasis on the 'Europe of Fatherlands' discourse, like the Gaullists in France, and wants an upgrading of the subnational regions within the EU multilevel governance system. In its view, there should be not only geographical limits to EU enlargements, but also limits on the scope of European integration in terms of the transfer of powers to the supranational level.

By contrast, the SPD stresses the international role of the European Union, the need for coordination in employment policy and the strengthening of social Europe, whilst the FDP puts a greater emphasis on political and economic liberalism as well as the protection of civic and political rights. The Green Party highlights the EU's potential to take a leadership role in a new global ecological paradigm and the need for the European Union to become a force for peace, far from the war logic perpetuated by the United States. Finally, *Die Linke* wants a change of direction in the European Union, from neo-liberal to more socially friendly policies, with particular attention to gender equality issues.

6 Public opinion and the European Union

As already discussed, the origin of the FRG is intrinsically linked to the process of European integration (Anderson and Goodman, 1993). From its outset, the Germans have vigorously supported the European project, which represented an opportunity to regain their shattered identity

in the eyes of the world after the catastrophic totalitarian period of the Third Reich (Schild, 2003, 32). The constellation of domestic and European developments set specific parameters for the symbiotic relationship between the FRG and Europe, so that the European integration design transformed the 'relationship between Germany and Europe to one of Germany in Europe' (Katzenstein, 1997, 19; see also Bulmer *et al.*, 2000, 2010). All German parliamentary parties supported this Europeanized state identity, which regarded the EEC after 1958 as an emergent 'civil power', interested in shaping world politics towards multilateralism and peace (Maull, 1990). However, since the 1990s, such unconditional support has given way to a more sceptical agenda (Schieder, 2011, 34) and its strong European vocation 'is no longer securely anchored in public opinion' (Paterson, 2010, 41).

Although Germans have been in favour of EU membership for more than three decades, as shown in the Eurobarometer surveys between 1979 and 1989 (see Figure 5.2), after German reunification this position changed, especially in East Germany (Scheuer and Schmitt, 2009, 580). By the late 1990s, most people believed that EU membership had brought more disadvantages than advantages. Only in the new millennium did the perception that the EU was of benefit pick up again, particularly after 2005 (Eurobarometer, 2008). This was particularly the case under the leadership of Chancellor Merkel, when a considerable improvement in the economic situation was registered, with unemployment declining from five million to slightly above three million even during the financial crisis in 2008–2009.

However, an overall air of scepticism pervades the minds of the German public towards specific aspects of EU membership. Whilst support for a common security and defence policy and for a European Constitution are high and even above the EU average, the level of trust in the EU as a whole is below average, and EU enlargement is even rejected outright by the majority of the German public (Schieder, 2011, 36). Given the shift in German attitudes towards the EU, the political parties represented in the German parliament had incentives to exploit this scepticism in the public sphere. According to Andreas Wilkens, although support for European integration may decline in the short term, it is deemed to remain intact in the long term, being extremely connected to the identity of post-war Germany (Wilkens, 2004, 76).

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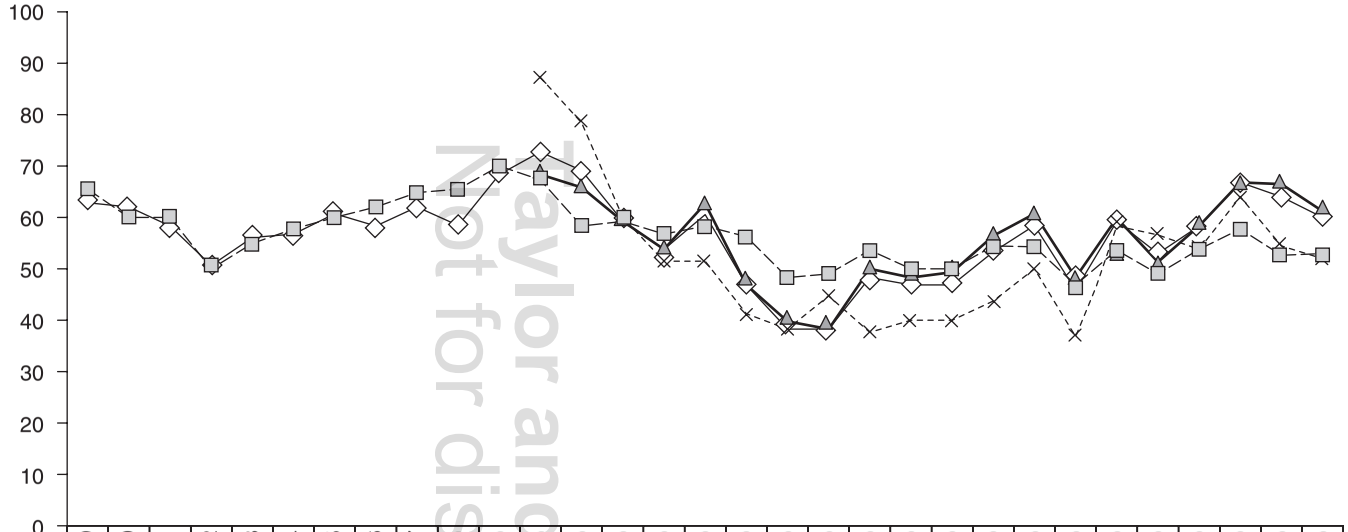
7 National and EP electoral systems

After the adoption of the absolute-majority two round system (TRS) in the German Empire (*Kaiserreich*) between 1871 and 1918 and the negative experience of the pure proportional representation system in the Weimar Republic, the Parliamentary Council forged a new electoral system in 1949 as a result of inter-party bargaining between democratic forces in West Germany. Whereas originally it was considered to be provisional, this system has remained virtually unchanged.

In accordance with Article 38 of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany, the members of the *Bundestag* are elected with a general, direct, free, equal, and secret vote. Whilst these five principles of voting are laid out in the Basic Law, the Federal Electoral Act regulates the German electoral system for national elections. German elections follow what is commonly known as a personalized proportional system (*Personalisiertes Verhältniswahlrecht*) or as a mixed member proportional (MMP) system that combines a personal vote in single-member districts with the principle of proportional representation.

As the MMP system has not so far unveiled any great negative effects, it therefore enjoys a high level of institutionalized legitimacy in Germany. As a result, its basic rules have remained unaltered and just some minor changes have been introduced. Since 1953, a switch to a dual-vote system has occurred, allowing citizens to cast two ballots in order to choose their representatives



	Oct. 1979	Oct.–Nov. 1980	Oct.–Nov. 1981	Oct.1982	Oct.1983	Oct.–Nov. 1984	Oct.–Nov. 1985	Oct.–Nov. 1986	Oct.–Nov. 1987	EB 30(Oct.–Nov.)	EB 32(Dec.1989)	EB 34(Dec.1990)	EB 36(Dec.1991)	EB 38(Dec.1992)	EB 40(Oct–Nov.1993)	EB 42(Dec.1994)	EB 43(1995)	EB 46(1996)	EB 48(1997)	EB 50(1998)	EB 52(1999)	EB 54(2000)	EB 56(2001)	EB 58(2002)	EB 60(2003)	EB 62(2004)	EB 64(2005)	EB 66(2006)	EB 68(2007)	EB 70(2008)	EB 70(2009)
—◇— Support Germany	64	62	58	51	57	57	61	58	62	59	69	73	69	60	53	61	47	39	38	48	47	48	54	59	46	60	53	58	67	64	60
–□– Support EU average	66	61	61	51	55	58	60	62	65	66	70	68	59	60	57	58	57	48	49	54	51	50	55	55	48	54	50	54	58	53	53
—△— Support in West Germany												69	66	60	54	63	48	40	39	51	49	50	57	61	49	60	52	59	67	67	62
--×-- Support East Germany												87	79	60	52	52	42	39	45	38	40	40	44	50	37	58	57	54	64	55	53

Figure 5.2 German attitude to the European Union: 1999–2009

Source: Eurobarometer (2008) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm

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in Parliament. Whereas the first vote, *Erststimme*, is personal as it is conferred to a particular candidate in one of the nowadays 299 single-member constituencies, *Bundestagswahlkreise*, the second, *Zweitstimme,* is a party vote, awarded to an electoral list at the federal state level (*Landesliste*). This determines the relative strengths of the parties in the *Bundestag* and, more importantly, it may establish which parliamentary group or coalition of parties will reach the majority and, as a consequence, who will become Chancellor.

Moreover, a 5 per cent threshold for the election of members of Parliament was introduced in three constituencies in order to prevent the fragmentation of the party system, one of the major problems during the Weimar Republic. If a party fails to gain more than 5 per cent of all votes, it is not represented in the *Bundestag*, unless the party is able to win in at least three constituencies. Until 2009, the distribution of seats was calculated according to the so-called Hare-Niemeyer method, which reflects the strength of the smaller parties better than any others. Yet, since the *Bundestag* election in 2009, the so-called Sainte-Laguë/Schepers method has been introduced, whereby seats are distributed first amongst those candidates who gained more votes in the constituencies, whilst the remaining seats are then allocated to the candidates on the party list.

The number of constituency seats is crucial since it can affect the composition of the German *Bundestag*. If a party gains more constituency seats through the first vote than it is entitled according to its proportion of seats through the second vote, it nonetheless keeps these so-called 'overhang' seats (*Überhangmandate*). Hence, the *Bundestag* may exceed the number of 598 seats, such as after the 2009 general elections when it reached 622. It is worth mentioning that in July 2008, Germany's highest court ruled that the effect known as 'negative vote weight', arising in connection with overhang mandates, is unconstitutional (Bundesverfassungsgericht, 2008).

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The 99 German members of the European Parliament are elected in a general, direct, free, equal, and secret ballot. The electoral system is proportional, with 'closed' lists of nominated candidates, meaning that voters do not have influence on the choice of candidates. Whilst in the past the Hare-Niemeyer method was used with a 5 per cent legal threshold, since 2009 the Sainte-Laguë/Schepers method has been introduced in Germany, allowing a high level of proportionality. Political parties can submit either a federal list or lists at the level of the *Bundesländer*. All parties field national lists, with the exception of the Christian Democrats (CDU) and the Bavarian Christian Socials (CSU). Whilst the latter present their list only in Bavaria, where their constituency is concentrated, the Christian Democrats do it in all other *Bundesländer*. There is only one national electoral district for these elections, and in order to avoid fragmentation of the party system and to reduce the chances of extremist parties, a 5 per cent threshold was imposed, as in the case of the general elections. This clause, however, was held to be unconstitutional in November 2011 by the Federal Constitutional Court, which argued that it violates the principle of equal opportunities for all political parties (Bundesverfassungsgericht, 2011).

8 A glance at the EP and national elections

The first European Parliament elections took place in Germany on 10 June 1979, following two regional elections in Rhineland-Palatinate on 18 March 1979 and Schleswig-Holstein on 29 April 1979, after the elections for the Federal President on 23 May 1979, and in conjunction with two local elections in Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate. This explained the higher turnouts of 81.1 and 81.5 per cent in Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate, respectively, against the average national figure of 65.7 per cent (Menke, 1985, 80). Apart from the innovative nature of the EP elections, political parties were faced with the general phenomenon of the public's lack of awareness of and indifference to European Parliament elections. In this sense, the main political parties,

the CDU/CSU, SPD, and FDP, had to turn their political campaigns into educational seminars in order to fill this gap. An electoral system based on proportional representation allowed for national or regional closed lists. Moreover, unlike other elections, citizens had only one vote, meaning that the campaign, which was usually carried out based on the personalization of candidates, was replaced by a more programmatic approach.

In terms of the campaign, the CDU and FDP adjusted their manifestos to those drafted by their respective transnational party groups. In particular, the FDP adopted entirely the European Liberal and Democrats group's 'Programme for Europe', adding to it a two-page national appeal. Although the FDP did not agree with all policy proposals, it clearly emphasized a European electoral strategy under the slogan 'A Liberal Europe' (Menke, 1985, 72, 74).

As to the CDU, its role was instrumental in formulating the European People's Party manifesto. However, pressure from its sister party CSU, headed by Prime Minister of Bavaria, Franz Joseph Strauß, led to a more polarizing national programme and campaign approach. The main slogan of the CDU changed from '*Politik für die Freiheit-Glück für die Menschen-CDU für Europa*' ('A policy for freedom-happiness for the people-CDU for Europe') to '*Deutsche wählt das freie und soziale Europa. Gegen ein sozialistisches Europa*' ('Germans vote for a free and Social Europe. Against a Socialist Europe') (Menke, 1985, 72–3).

The CSU was even more polarized than the CDU with its slogan '*Mut zur Freiheit-Chance für Europa*' ('Freedom Yes-Socialism No' and 'The Courage of Freedom-a Chance for Europe') (Menke, 1985, 72). However, Franz Josef Strauß had to deal with inner party dissent in relation to the nomination of the quite conservative candidate Otto von Habsburg as head of list of the CSU. In particular, the new General Secretary Edmund Stoiber regarded the latter as a reactionary and preferred Count von Stauffenberg, the son of the former officer who took part in the assassination attempt of Hitler on 20 July 1944 (Menke, 1985, 71). Although supportive of the EU, the CSU differed from the other parliamentary parties in their position towards European integration. The CSU presented a 'Europe of Fatherlands' discourse, in which the national interest was at the forefront. Moreover, it emphasized the need to strengthen the position of the *Bundesländer* at the European level (Menke, 1985).

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As to the SPD, traditionally more on the right of the political spectrum compared to other European Socialist parties, it moved slightly to the left in its electoral programme and during the campaign in order to be more consistent with the Euro-manifesto of the Socialist Group of the European Parliament. The main slogans were '*Sprecher für Deutschland-geachtet in Europa: Die Sozialdemokraten Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt-SPD*' ('Spokesmen for Germany-respected throughout Europe; The Social-Democrats Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt-SPD') and '*Für ein Europa der Arbeitnehmer*' ('For a Workers' Europe') (Menke, 1985, 71). The SPD obtained 40.8 per cent of the vote and secured 35 seats in the Strasbourg arena.

Although the CDU/CSU used a polarization strategy, the overall difference in terms of share of the vote was about 2 per cent between the 1976 general election and the 1979 European Parliament election. Subsequently, the victory of the SPD/FDP coalition government and the defeat of CDU/CSU Chancellor candidate Franz Josef Strauß proved that the Euro-election was not a mere dress rehearsal for the 1980 federal electoral contest. The CDU achieved 39.1 per cent and 34 seats, whilst the CSU got 10.1 per cent and eight seats. The FDP attracted 6 per cent of vote and managed to send seven representatives to the European Parliament.

Moreover, the first direct EP election was a key factor in structuring the highly diverse Green movement towards a fully-fledged political party. The Greens achieved 3.2 per cent nationwide and thus were entitled to benefit from 4.8 million DM of public funding (Menke, 1985, 79).

At the 1983 general elections, a change of power took place, which led to a new coalition government between the CDU/CSU and the FDP under the leadership of Chancellor Helmut

Table 5.3 National election results in Germany: 1976–2009

Political Parties	*1976*	*1980*	*1983*	*1987*	*1990*	*1994*	*1998*	*2002*	*2005*	*2009*
CDU/CSU	48.6	44.5	48.8	44.3	43.8	41.5	35.1	38.5	35.2	33.8
SPD	42.6	42.9	38.2	37.0	33.5	36.4	40.9	38.5	34.2	23.0
FDP	7.9	10.6	7.0	9.1	11.0	6.9	6.2	7.4	9.8	14.6
DieGrünen[1]	—	1.5	5.6	8.3	3.8[4] 1.2[5]	7.4	6.7	8.6	8.1	10.7
PDS/*Die Linke*[2]	—	—	—	—	2.4	4.4	5.1	4.0	8.7	11.9
NPD	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.3	—	0.3	0.4	1.6	1.5
DP	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
KPD/DKP [3]	0.3	0.2	0.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Others	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.7	4.0	3.4	5.7	2.6	2.4	4.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Turnout	90.7	88.6	89.1	84.3	77.8	79.0	82.2	79.1	77.7	70.8

Source: Bundeswahlleiter (2009) www.Bundeswahlleiter.De/De/Bundestagswahlen.

Notes:
[1] 1980–1990: *Die Grünen Y.*; 1990: *DieGrünen/Bündnis 90*; 1994–today: *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*.
[2] 1990–2004: *Partei Des Demokratischen Sozialismus;* 2005: *Partei Des Demokratischen Sozialismus + Die Wahlalternative Arbeit und soziale Gerechtigkeit = Die Linke*.
[3] 1949–1953: *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (afterwards illegal); 1972–today: *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*.
[4] *Die Grüne*.
[5] *Bündnis 90*.

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Kohl. Moreover, for the first time the Greens achieved parliamentary representation one year and three months after the general elections, when the executive was still enjoying its honeymoon. As such, the opposition did not register substantial gains.

The 1984 European Parliament election sanctioned the rise of the Greens as a new party, in spite of the prejudices of the other established political parties, due to their links to more extreme left-wing elements, particularly in the terror scene of the 1980s (Bulmer and Patterson, 1986, 197–8).

As previously, the CDU presented itself as the European party in Germany. It worked closely with the EPP to coordinate its national manifesto with the transnational one. The main slogan was devised around the new Kohl government and was '*Aufwärts mit Deutschland Mit uns für Europa*' (Germany's getting better-with us for Europe.') The campaign took a more Nationalist orientation, emphasizing the role of the *Bundesländer,* particularly Bavaria, within a 'Europe of nation-states'. The party was also under pressure due to the growing protests of farmers and the cutbacks in agricultural subsidies introduced by the agriculture minister in accordance with the CSU portfolio (Bulmer and Patterson, 1986, 199).

Following bribery scandals involving key figures of the FDP, such as Count Otto Lambsdorff, Hans-Dietrich Genscher decided to step down as leader and many left-wing Liberals left the party. In terms of the electoral campaign, the FDP relied on the European Liberal and Democratic parliamentary group's Euro-manifesto and did not invest very much in the campaign (Bulmer and Patterson, 1986, 200).

As to the SPD, despite the slogan '*Macht Europa stark*' ('Make Europe strong'), its campaign mainly focussed on national issues, failing nevertheless to transform the EP electoral contest into a test for the ruling centre-right coalition. In the background, European issues were raised during the campaign, especially with regard to the relevance of the Franco-German friendship for

European integration, Europe's role in international affairs, and the development of European defence policy, particularly in relation to NATO. Finally, the active participation of women was addressed with regard to the introduction of female candidates in the SPD list, although their names appeared mostly at the bottom, so that they had only a few chances to be elected (Bulmer and Patterson, 1986, 201).

Under the main slogan 'think globally, act locally', the Greens introduced new themes into the European campaign, criticizing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and its detrimental effects on the environment, warning against the rise of a superpower Europe, and calling for equal opportunities for women (Bulmer and Patterson, 1986, 203).

The CDU obtained 34 seats by achieving 37.5 per cent of the vote, thus losing 1.6 per cent in comparison to 1979; the SPD got 33 seats with its 37.4 per cent, 3.4 per cent less than in the previous election; and the CSU secured seven seats with its 8.5 per cent of the vote, 1.6 per cent less. In addition, there were the three seats nominated by the Berlin Chamber of Deputies, two for the CDU and one for the SPD. The Greens appeared as the real winners with their 8.2 per cent of the vote, five points more than in 1979, and secured seven seats in the EP arena. By contrast, the FDP with its 4.8 per cent of the vote, 1.2 less than in the previous election, failed to meet the required threshold by a whisker and thus any representation in Strasbourg.

The subsequent EP election held in 1989 at the end of the national electoral cycle registered the lowest turnout in the German history of all national, local, and regional elections. In spite of a booming economy combined with a low unemployment rate, the coalition government led by Christian Democrat Chancellor Helmut Kohl suffered from a downturn in terms of support. The CDU campaign coordinated by Secretary-General Heiner Geißler used a polarization strategy with its provocative slogan '*Radikale und SPD-Zukunft und Wohlstand ade*' ('Radicals and SPD-Goodbye to the Future and Wealth') that raised considerable dissent within the party (*Der Spiegel*, 12 June 1989a, 25–7). The CDU strategy was nationally oriented, although its electoral manifesto was intertwined with that of the European People's Party (EPP). After the death of Franz Josef Strauß in October 1988, the CSU struggled to find another charismatic politician who could achieve the same mobilizing effects as his predecessor. Amongst the coalition government parties, with only 8.2 per cent of the vote and eight seats, the CSU appeared as the great loser, challenged by the new opposition party *Republikaner* that coined an ironic slogan '*Nur Bayern können CSU wählen*' ('Only Bavarians can vote for the CSU') (*Der Spiegel*, 26 June 1989b, 25).

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Table 5.4 EP election results in Germany: 1979–2004

Political Party	*1979*		*1984*		*1989*		*1994*		*1999*		*2004*	
	%	*Seats*	*%*	*Seats*	*%*	*Seats*	*%*	*Seats*	*%*	*Seats*	*%*	*Seats*
CDU	39.1	34	37.5	34	29.5	25	32.1	39	39.3	40	36.5	40
SPD	40.8	35	37.4	33	37.3	31	32.2	40	30.7	33	21.5	23
FDP	6	4	4.8	—	5.6	4	4.1	—	3.0	—	6.1	7
CSU	10.1	8	8.5	7	8.2	7	6.8	8	9.4	10	8	9
Greens	—	—	8.2	7	8.4	8	10.1	12	6.4	7	11.9	13
PDS/*Die Linke*	—	—	—	—	—	—	4.7	—	5.8	6	6.1	7
Republikaner	—	—	—	—	7.1	6	3.9	—	1.7	—	1.9	—
Others	4	—	3.6	—	3.9	—	6.1	—	3.7	—	8	—
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Turnout	65.7	—	56.7	—	62.3	—	60.0	—	45.3	—	43	—

Source: Bundeswahlleiter (2009) www.Bundeswahlleiter.De/De/Europawahlen.

Under the leadership of the charismatic Franz Schönhuber, the *Republikaner* presented a more critical approach towards the EC, with a mix of law and order issues, anti-immigration discourse, and nationalism, which were instrumental in paving the way for its victory at the expense of the CDU/CSU.

Under the motto '*Wir sind Europa*' ('We are Europe'), the main opposition party, the SPD, tried to develop a long-term strategy in order to gain power at the federal level. The party achieved 37.3 per cent of the votes cast, 0.1 less in relation to the 1984 European election, thus losing two of its 33 seats.

By contrast, amongst the opposition parties, the more left-wing Greens appeared as the winners with their 8.4 of the vote. This outcome was favoured by the Greens' dynamic campaign, that under the slogan '*Europa: Geschäfte ohne Grenzen*' ('Europe: Business without Borders'), criticized the capitalist nature of the European project, and by the controversial nomination of Rudko Kawczynski, a stateless Roma, who according to the law was not entitled to run elections (*Der Spiegel*, 12 June 1989c, 124). Finally, the FDP was able again to achieve representation in the European parliamentary arena in Strasbourg.

The 1994 European elections were the first contested within the framework of Germany's post-reunification. Although no dramatic changes had occurred in the political landscape, the successor party of the 'Socialist Unity Party of Germany', the Party of Democratic Socialism, PDS (*Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*) was very keen to establish itself beyond its traditional constituencies in the eastern *Bundesländer*. Moreover, Euro-elections took place in a super election year (*Superwahljahr*), when 19 elections were scheduled, culminating in the national elections in October. By representing a crucial rehearsal for the federal electoral contests, EP elections gained more significance as a trendsetter. In total, 24 political parties and groups ran the race. In 1994, after a period of recession, the economy started to pick up again and Chancellor Helmut Kohl exploited this growth as a tool against the opposition parties.

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The Christian Democrats pursued a pro-European campaign, albeit mainly dominated by domestic issues. Their main poster, 'Against War, Violence and Terrorism in Europe: Peace for Everybody!' appeared dull, disclosing an undefined and utopian approach to European elections (Paterson *et al.*, 1996, 76). Yet, the party eventually managed to perform better than expected by scoring 32 per cent of the vote, thus gaining 2.5 points more than in 1989. In contrast, the CSU shifted more to the right by conducting a sort of 'Europe of the Fatherlands' campaign, centred on need to carry forward the interests of Bavaria. This strategy allowed the party to get 6.8 per cent of the vote, thus limiting its loss by 1.4 per cent compared to the previous Euro-election.

Due to its declining fortunes at previous elections, the FDP was especially concerned about its 'survival' and decided to pursue a pro-European approach. However, due to the need to renew its internal organization, after Hans-Dietrich Genscher stepped down, it was unable to focus on the election and attract enough votes to gain representation in Strasbourg. Regarding the election as a mere electoral test, the SPD resorted to some posters –'The Mafia in Europe must be shattered!' or 'Security instead of fear!' – that emphasized topics that were discussed at the European level (Paterson *et al.*, 1996, 77). In spite of a promising outlook at the beginning of 1994, the SPD's performance was rather disappointing: it lost over 5 per cent of the vote gained in 1989, yet at 32.2 per cent of the vote, it registered the highest score amongst all the other political parties in this contest.

The Greens, who followed a critical approach to the Treaty of the European Union, particularly in relation to the democratic process, the environment, trade, and environment policy, obtained 10.1 per cent of the vote, 1.7 points more than in the previous Euro-elections, thus securing 12 seats (Paterson *et al.*, 1996, 75–6). The reformist Communist PDS, unable to become a party with representation in the western regions of Germany, had difficulty gaining a seat at

the national and European levels. The PDS supported a supranational European Union, which would offer more protection to workers through the reinforcement of European social policy.

The 1999 European Parliament election took place nine months after the setting up of an SPD/Green coalition government led by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. Although still in their honeymoon period, the government parties did not perform well at the Euro-elections. Tensions and disagreements between the coalition partners over the Kosovo War, as well as social policy issues, contributed to undermine the image of the executive. In the end, the EP contest became an opportunity for the citizens to protest against the direction of the red–green coalition.

Overall, parties devoted less attention to the international dimension in their electoral programmes. The three traditional parties, the CDU, SPD, and FDP, emphasized both economic and foreign policy issues, whilst the smaller parties revealed a different profile in this matter. In particular, whereas the CSU highlighted international cooperation as well as the role of the regions in the EU, the Greens stressed the question of the environment and the position of women in society; the PDS underlined issues related to social justice; and the *Republikaner* called for law and order, emphasizing the importance of political leadership (Binder and Wüst, 2004, 42–3).

The 1999 Euro-election led to the victory of the CDU and CSU, with their 39.3 per cent and 9.4 per cent of vote, respectively, as well as to the defeat of the SPD and, in particular, the Greens with their 30.7 per cent and 6.4 per cent, respectively. The electoral results also sanctioned the PDS' first entry to the Strasbourg arena, whilst confirming the FDP's exclusion.

Being held one-and-a-half years after the federal general elections, the 2004 European elections could be regarded as 'mid-term'. The CDU/CSU used the European Parliament electoral race to criticize the red–green government. National issues dominated the campaign, especially the mismanagement of tax and labour market reform (Niedermayer, 2005, 56). The CDU remained loyal to its main slogan of being the European party in Germany and developing a party manifesto that was close to that of the EPP. The CSU particularly emphasized the 'Europe of the regions' theme by using the slogan 'For a strong Bavaria in Europe' ('*Für ein starkes Bayern in Europa*').

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For the FDP, under Guido Westerwelle's new leadership, it was crucial to perform well in the European elections. Silvana Koch-Mehrin became the head of the list and was instrumental in changing the image of the FDP. Her dynamism was fundamental in attracting younger voters. The party manifesto, '*Wir können Europa besser! Für ein freies und besseres Europa*' ('We can do Europe better! For a free and fair Europe'), contained a more optimistic and constructive approach of the FDP. The PDS developed a manifesto entitled '*Alternativen sind machbar: Für ein soziales, demokratisches und friedliches Europa'* ('Alternatives are possible: For a social, democratic and peaceful Europe'), whereby it presented itself as an alternative to the more established political parties (Niedermayer, 2005, 46–7).

Whilst the CDU, CSU, and SPD concentrated their campaigns on national issues, smaller parties conducted a campaign about European issues. The results of the 2004 elections led to the success of the CDU and CSU, with their respective 36.5 per cent and 8 per cent of the vote, against the government parties. The SPD faced its worse defeat in the history of Euro-elections by receiving only 21.5 per cent of vote. On the contrary, the Green Party and the FDP almost doubled their respective scores compared to the previous EU contest. Accordingly, the former succeeded in sending 13 members to Strasbourg, six more than in 1999, whilst the latter, with its seven members, finally achieved representation in the European Parliament again.

In sum, the German political parties did not invest very much in the EP contests, but rather attempted to make a profit out of the generous public funding system. Electoral manifestos did not change to a great extent over the years, whilst the vast majority of citizens did not appear very interested in such elections.

9 The 2009 European elections

9.1 Party lists and manifestos

Overall, 32 political parties ran in the 2009 EP electoral race which was strongly dominated by the impact of the financial crisis triggered by the collapse of Lehman Brothers and the real estate market in the United States. In spite of the lack of a genuine discussion about European issues, most German parties being supportive of the European integration process, one of the most aggressive campaigns occurred, mainly due to the narrow window between the European Parliament and German general elections scheduled for September 2009.

In line with the manifesto of the Party of European Socialists (PES), the SPD programme was entitled 'For Europe: strong and social' ('*Für Europa: stark und sozial!*') clearly stressing the need to reinforce a social Europe against the financial crisis caused by the banking sector (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, 2009). Great emphasis was put on an enhanced employment policy, achieved by an infrastructure programme financed by the European Union, and on investments in the field of education, research, and vocational training. The Social Democrats advocated a coordination of social policy at the European level rather than the harmonization of social policy, because of national differences. The SPD called for a change of the financial architecture by reinforcing regulatory and control institutions. It also urged the setting up of a credit line for small and medium-sized enterprises, so that business across the EU could be supported especially during the financial crisis. Immigration was regarded as positive; however, the Social Democrats advocated an integrated approach that involved the cooperation of migrants' countries of origin. (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, 2009, 12).

The Euro-manifesto of the CDU, entitled 'Strong Europe-Secure Future' ('*Starkes Europa-Sichere Zukunft*'), aimed at strengthening and securing the social market economy in Germany and the European Union (*Christlich Demokratische Union*, 2009, 4). It spelt out the party opposition to the harmonization of social policy in Europe, as this would contribute to a damping down of the generous and strong German welfare state. The manifesto emphasized particularly the need to improve the EU economic competitiveness by adopting the successful German export-oriented model and calling for a new financial architecture to protect particularly small investors and stakeholders. The new Freedom and Security Space introduced under the Schengen Treaty put in evidence the need to strengthen judicial cooperation (*Christlich Demokratische Union*, 2009, 10–12).

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Amongst the four smaller political parties, the CSU was the most conservative. It raised the importance of a 'Europe of regions' in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. Its identity as a Christian-Democratic party became clear throughout the document in which references to family and religious values were included. The Euro-manifesto also emphasized the importance of parliamentary participation in the EU decision-making process (*Christlich-Soziale Union*, 2009). The CSU Euro-manifesto devoted great space to agricultural issues, calling for the devolution of agricultural competences to the regional level.

Whilst the SPD, CDU, and CSU produced relatively short manifestos, the FDP, *Die Linke* and the Greens drafted lengthy and detailed documents to present their policy proposals. The Liberal Party's Euro-manifesto entitled 'Freedom in Europe in the World of the Twenty-first Century' ('*Freiheit in Europa in der Welt des 21. Jahrhunderts*') used several catchwords, 'freedom', 'subsidiarity', 'competitiveness', and 'responsibility', to attract the electorate. The Liberal Party, albeit strongly pro-European, regarded the need to set limits to the European Union, and in particular a cap on the budget. The Euro-manifesto claimed that the European Union had enough financial resources that were not used efficiently. In particular, funding for the CAP and for the structural funds could be reduced in order to finance other more

future-oriented policies (*Freie Demokratische Partei*, 2009). Another element that was sketched out in the manifesto was the reduction of an overwhelming bureaucracy in the EU. The liberalization of markets through the reduction of red tape was also a major theme amongst the Liberals. The FDP stated that it wanted to bring more market to the European economy and cut back on those subsidies distorting competition. Finally, innovation and education were the two key aspects capable of preserving competitiveness worldwide. Like the SPD and CDU, the FDP also rejected a harmonization of social policy due to the differences between the various countries (*Freie Demokratische Partei*, 2009).

At the beginning of 2009, the German Greens launched their 170-page manifesto, entitled '*Volles Programm mit WUMS. Für ein besseres Europa!*' ('Full programme with WUMS. For a better Europe') with Rebecca Harms and Reinhard Bütikofer at the top of the electoral list (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*, 2009, 16). In their view, Europe was a 'matter of the heart' and should not be allowed to become a project of the elite. The core message of the Green Party was what they labelled the 'New Green Deal for Europe', which aimed at restructuring the European economy towards sustainable green technologies, including following principles of social justice between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. According to the Greens, climate change policy was interlinked with all other policies such as energy, transport, economy, as well as foreign and development policy. The Green Party supported the Treaty of Lisbon; however, it regarded it as a transition towards a slimmed down constitution (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*, 2009, 3).

The Greens were very close both to the SPD and the Left Party in their conception of 'social Europe'. The protection of the working population and solidarity with less developed regions were emphasized. Moreover, the Euro-manifesto stressed the need to decentralize possible public services as much as possible in order to provide an optimal delivery to citizens. An open and welcoming Europe for minorities, particularly Roma, as well as migrants was strenuously advocated. Internationally, the EU should be engaged in reforming international institutions and contribute to the development of world peace (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*, 2009).

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Die Linke was the only party that put forward what could be defined as 'transformative Euro-criticism', reflecting a constructive approach towards a new direction to the EU, rather than an attitude of rejection of the European project (Harmsen, 2007, 208–12). Its Euro-manifesto, entitled '*Solidarität, Demokratie und Frieden-Gemeinsam für den Wechsel in Europa*' ('Solidarity, Democracy and Peace-Together for Change in Europe') condemned EU neo-liberal and capitalist policies by calling for an increase in funding in favour of weaker economies and by promoting more radical legislation in order to prevent the recurrence of the dramatic events that led to the breakdown of the financial sector (*Die Linke*, 2009).

Under Oskar Lafontaine's leadership, *Die Linke* was the only German party to oppose the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty since it perpetuated a policy of liberalization reducing the rights of workers across Europe and allowed for the further militarization of EU foreign and security policy. Last but not least, the treaty was unfavourable as it was conceived through a top-down process without consulting the population by way of a referendum (*Die Linke*, 2009, 1–3, 23).

Besides the six parliamentary parties, another 26 lists took part in the elections, including two extreme right-wing parties, two extreme left-wing parties, three Christian-Conservative parties, two ecological movements, three pensioners' parties, three single-issue parties, and even eight citizens' lists, clearly revealing increasingly popular anti-party feelings (Saalfeld, 2005, 49–54).

The far right-wing DVU and *Die Republikaner* expressed their opposition to the EU's centripetal tendencies and to Turkey's prospective membership. Finally, the Christian '*Partei für Arbeit, Umwelt und Familie*', AUF (Party for Labour, Environment and Family) ran the electoral race as the German representative of the transnational movement 'Libertas', financed by the Irish Tycoon Declan Ganley, but failed in the end to get representation in Strasbourg (Euractiv.com, 8 June 2009).

Table 5.5 Euromanifestos of non-parliamentary parties

Ideological origins	*Political party*	*Main campaign points*
Transnational European parties	*Europa-Demokratie-Esperanto* – EDE (Europe-Democracy-Esperanto)	• Democratization of EU • Introduction of Esperanto as main working language in EU
	Newropeans	• European government • reinforced European integration
Citizens' groups	*Das Generationen-Bündnis* – 50 plus (50 Plus-Alliance of Generations)	• Anti-party movement
	Bündnis Für Deutschland, Für Demokratie Durch Volksabstimmung – Ab Jetzt (*Volksabstimmung*) (From Now)	• Direct democracy • Local democracy
	Freie Wähler – FW (Free Voters)	
	Gerechtigkeit Braucht Bürgerrechte-Wir Danken Für Ihr Vertrauen! – Für Volksentscheide (Wählergemeinschaft): (For People's Decision-Making [Voters' Community]. Justice Needs Citizens' Rights – Thanks for your Trust!)	
	Bürgerrechtsbewegung Solidarität – BÜSO (Civic Rights Movement Solidarity)	
	Freie Bürger Initiative – FBI (Free Citizens' Initiative)	
	Aufbruch Für Bürgerrechte, Freiheit Und Gesundheit – Aufbruch (New Beginning for Civil Rights, Freedom and Health)	• Choice in the health sector • Critical of health sector being dominated by economic interests in Germany and European Union
Single-issue parties	*Bayernpartei* – BP (Bavaria Party)	• Regionalist issues • Independence of Bavaria • Against centralistic tendencies in EU
	Die Violetten: Für Spirituelle Politik-Die Violetten (The Violets-for Spiritual Policy)	• Spiritual dimension of politics • Non-violent, holistic policies • humanistic ideology • No clear message about Europe; very abstract
	Familienpartei Deutschlands – Familie (Family Party Of Germany)	• Support for family friendly policies in Germany and at EU level
	Feministische Partei-Die Frauen-Die Frauen – (Feminist Party-The Women)	• Equality between men and women (gender mainstreaming) • More women in top positions of EU • Non-violent approach to politics
	Piratenpartei Deutschlands – Piraten (Pirate Party Of Germany)	• Against censorship on the internet • Against patents and copyright as major obstacle to knowledge society

(continued)

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Table 5.5 (continued)

Ideological origins	*Political party*	*Main campaign points*
Pensioners' parties	*Die Grauen-Generationspartei-Die Grauen* (The Grays-Generation Party)	• Better welfare conditions for pensioners • Better pensions for pensioners
	Rentnerinnen Und Rentner Partei – RRP (Female and Male Pensioneers' Party)	
	Rentner Partei Deutschlands – *Rentner* (Pensioneers' Party Of Germany)	
Extreme right-wing parties	*Deutsche Volksunion* – DVU (German People's Union)	• Against the European Union • for 'Europe of fatherlands' • Against membership of Turkey
	Die Republikaner – REP (Republican Party/Republicans)	• For a Christian defined European Union • For 'Europe of fatherlands' • Against membership of Turkey
Extreme left-wing parties	*Deutsche Kommunistische Partei* – DKP (German Communist Party)	• Against Europe of monopoly capitalism • Against capitalist Europe
	Partei Der Sozialen Gleichheit-Sektion Der Vierten Internationale – PSG (Party of Social Equality-Section of the Fourth International)	• For a United Europe of Socialist states • Against capitalist European Union
Christian-Conservative parties	*Partei Für Arbeit, Umwelt Und Familie-Christen Für Deutschland* – AUF (Party for Labour, Environment, and Family, Christians for Germany)	• For subsidiarity and decentralization in EU • Christian values should be enshrined in treaties • Against abortion
	Partei Bibeltreuer Christen – PBC (Party of Bible-Abiding Christians)	
	Christliche Mitte: Für Ein Deutschland Nach Gottes Geboten – CM (Christian Centre: for a Germany According to God's Commandments)	
Ecological parties	*Mensch-Umwelt-Tierschutz* – MUT (Man, Environment, and Animal Protection)	• Not specific about European Union • General statements about holistic integration of environment and animal protection in overall life-style of man
	Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei – ÖDP (Ecological Democratic Party)	

Sources: Authors' table Based on Data from *Europa-Demokratie-Esperanto* (2009); Newropeans (2009); 50plus – *Das Generationen-Bündnis* (2009); *Ab Jetzt Bündnis Für Deutschland, Für Demokratie Durch Volksabstimmung* (2009); *Freie Wähler* (2009); *Für Volksentscheide* (2009); *Bürgerrechtsbewegung Solidarität* (2009); *Freie Bürger Initiative* (2009); *Aufbruch Für Bürgerrechte, Freiheit Und Gesundheit* (2009); *Bayernpartei* (2009); *Die Violetten* (2009); *Familienpartei Deutschlands* (2009); *Feministische Partei-Die Frauen* (2009); *Piratenpartei Deutschlands* (2009); *Die Grauen-Generationspartei* (2009); *Rentnerinnen Und Rentner Partei* (2009); *Rentner Partei Deutschlands* (2009); *Deutsche Volksunion* (2009); *Die Republikaner* (2009); *Deutsche Kommunistische Partei* (2009); *Partei Der Sozialen Gleichheit* (2009); *Partei Für Arbeit, Umwelt Und Familie-Christen Für Deutschland* (2009); *Partei Bibeltreuer Christen* (2009); *Christliche Mitte* (2009), *Mensch-Umwelt-Tierschutz* (2009); *Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei* (2009).

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9.2 Electoral campaign

The European Parliament's offices in Berlin and Munich launched a campaign to mobilize voters to go to the polls, reminding them that if they did not cast their ballot, others would decide for them. The campaign '*European elections 2009-Your decision'* was coordinated with all the other 26 countries of the European Union. In particular, the European Parliament, which was very keen to attract young voters, even resorted to social networks such as Facebook and YouTube in order to reach them (Gagatek *et al.*, 2009).

Given that there was no official opening of electoral campaigns in Germany, the process started with European conferences organized by the various political parties. The SPD was the first to convene such a meeting on 8 December 2008, thus nominating Martin Schulz, Chairman of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament as *Spitzenkandidat*. The SPD appeared split between a right-centre wing around its leader Franz Müntefering and a left wing around other chief members, Kurt Beck and Sigmar Gabriel. The main dividing position was over labour market legislation known as the 'Hartz IV' reform, introduced by the Schröder government and implemented between 2002 and 2005.

There was widespread fear amongst the Social Democrats that such internal disagreement would seriously damage the party and affect its electoral outcome. The European party conference was characterized by a half-empty hall in Berlin (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8 December 2008) grounded on the common feeling that the SPD was losing out as a junior partner in the Grand Coalition. Moreover, Vice-Chancellor Frank-Walter Steinmeier was not regarded as a charismatic personality capable of taking the party forward. On 11 March 2009, the CDU organized its *Europakongress* to present its programme, which mainly focussed on economic issues related to the financial crisis urging the adoption of the German model of social market economy at the European and global levels. European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering campaigned under the motto '*Für Schutz durch Gemeinschaft: Wir in Europa*' ('For protection through the community: We in Europe') whilst Chancellor Merkel featured as a pillar of stability and trustworthiness in television spots (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 17 March 2009).

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At the European conference held on 8 May 2009, the CSU, faced with domestic problems in Bavaria and concerned about the constant low turnout at the EP elections, called for the unity of the party in order to gather sufficient consensus and exceed the 5 per cent threshold at the forthcoming Euro-elections (*Die Welt*, 9 May 2009a). The CSU ran its campaign under the slogan '*Für ein Europa der Werte'* ('For a Europe of values'), thus distancing itself programmatically from the CDU (*Christlich-Soziale Union*, 2009). After Edmund Stoiber's resignation, the party kept a dual leadership with the Prime Minister of the Regional Government, Günther Beckstein, and Party Chairman Erwin Huber. However, in September 2008, the CSU won the regional elections, yet dropped from an absolute majority of 60 per cent to a relative one of 43.3 per cent. Horst Seehofer, who became the new Leader and Regional Prime Minister, had therefore the difficult task of preparing and relaunching the party for the elections to the European Parliament.

As to the FDP, the new young and dynamic head of list Silvana Koch-Mehrin, whose smiling face graced numerous posters, contributed to the upward trend of the party through an intense campaign that focussed on 'the EU as a success story' (*Freie Demokratische Partei*, 2009). The European party conference held on 17 January 2009 was quite pragmatic and dominated by domestic questions, such as Guido Westerwelle's official announcement that the FDP would support the grand coalition government, whilst European issues were sidelined (*Freie Demokratische Partei*, 2009).

The Greens ran an optimistic and self-confident campaign based on their 'New Green Deal' socio-economic plan. Probably the most divided European party conference was that of *Die*

Linke. Almost all eight members of the European Parliament elected in 2004 were deselected in the European party conference in Essen on 1 March 2009. A radicalization of the party took place, in which an anti-capitalist position and a total rejection of the Lisbon Treaty were approved. The overall approach was not only directed against the liberal policies of the Barroso Commission, but also against the CDU/CSU/SPD coalition. The financial crisis was regarded as a favourable background to exercise strategic opposition against the policies of the German government (*Der Spiegel*, 27 February 2009a). Two incumbent MEPs, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann and André Brie were excluded from the list, presumably for their positions regarding human rights abuses in Cuba and, in the latter's case, for her support for the Lisbon Treaty, against the official party line (*Die Zeit*, 26 February 2009a; *Der Spiegel*, 14 May 2009b). The main candidate became one of the co-founders and long-standing leader, Lothar Bisky.

The CDU campaign started in mid-April 2009 with a series of slogans related to the importance of the European Union for Germany. One of its characteristics was the lack of personalization of the campaign around its chief candidate Hans-Gert Pöttering (*Der Spiegel*, 16 March 2009c; CDU.TV, 2009). This was done on purpose, given that he was hardly known at the national level even if he was at the head of the European Parliament in the previous legislature between January 2007 and June 2009 (Viola, 2010). By contrast, Chancellor Merkel featured as a key element in electoral posters and videos.

The SPD carried out an aggressive campaign against virtually all other political parties, by producing a series of provocative posters, such as 'Hot air would vote for Die Linke', 'Finance sharks vote for the FDP', and 'Wage dumpers vote for the CDU', referring to the reluctance of the Chancellor's party to adopt a national minimum wage (*Die Welt*, 29 May 2009b). Only the Green Party was spared from CDU attacks. This was interpreted as a strategic move beyond the European elections, geared towards a potential federal government coalition (*Die Zeit*, 13 June 2009b). The main Socialist candidate Martin Schulz was almost invisible in the Euro-campaign (*Die Zeit*, 4 May 2009c).

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Unlike the other German parliamentary parties, the FDP centred its campaign on chief candidate Silvana Koch-Mehrin, who called herself a 'Eurofighter' in her own blog. The campaign was also combined with other local, regional, and general election campaigns. The Green Party used its detailed programme 'New Green Deal' to target issues that were common to the European Union and Germany. The slogan 'WUMS for a better Europe' was employed in all posters along with themes against nuclear energy, genetically modified food, and economic and social injustice (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*, 2009). Finally, *Die Linke*'s campaign was rather populist, with radical slogans in its posters and television spots against the bank bailouts by the German and other governments across Europe, such as 'Millionaires to the till' and 'Europe-wide minimum wage'.

In sum, the campaign was dominated by national issues, which were, however, connected to the European level. The lacklustre campaign was just a rehearsal for the more important general elections on 27 September 2009.

9.3 Electoral results

At the 2009 EP contest in Germany, turnout reached its lowest level of 43.3 per cent. The ruling CDU obtained 30.7 per cent of the votes cast and 34 seats, thus losing 5.9 percentage points and six seats. Its sister party, the CSU, also registered a slight decline of 0.8 per cent, reducing its representation in Strasbourg to seven members. Yet, the big loser in the Euro-elections was the CDU/CSU junior government partner, the SPD, which achieved its worst record of 20.8 per cent of the vote, yet kept the same number of 23 seats as before. By

contrast, the Green Party was able to improve by 0.2 percentage points and one seat compared to the 2004 electoral score by achieving 12.1 per cent and 14 seats. This confirmed the Greens as the third strongest political force after the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats.

However, the most spectacular rise was registered by the FDP, which almost doubled its electoral share from 6.1 per cent to 11 per cent, and went from seven to 12 seats. This was certainly due to the dynamic and vibrant campaign undertaken by its head of list, Silvana Koch-Mehrin. *Die Linke*'s electoral outcome increased from 6.1 per cent to 7.5 per cent, thus assigning the party eight seats in the European Parliament, one more than in 2004.

Table 5.6 EP election results in Germany: 2009

Political Parties	*%*	*Seats*
Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands – CDU	30.7	34
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands – SPD	20.8	23
Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Grüne	12.1	14
Freie Demokratische Partei – FDP	11.0	12
Die Linke	7.2	8
Christlich-Soziale Union In Bayern – CSU	7.2	8
Freie Wähler – FW	1.7	—
Die Republikaner – REP	1.3	—
Mensch-Umwelt-Tierschutz – MUT	1.1	—
Familien-Partei Deutschlands Familie	1.0	—
Piratenpartei Deutschland Piraten	0.9	—
Rentner Partei Deutschlands – RENTNER	0.8	—
Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei – ÖDP	0.5	—
Deutsche Volksunion – DVU	0.4	—
Rentnerinnen Und Rentner Partei – RPP	0.4	—
Feministische Partei-Die Frauen Die – FRAUEN	0.3	—
Partei Bibeltreuer Christen – PBC	0.3	—
Bündnis Für Deutschland, Für Demokratie Durch Volksabstimmung Ab Jetzt (Volksabstimmung)	0.3	—
Das Generationen-Bündnis 50Plus	0.3	—
Die GRAUEN-Generationspartei DIE GRAUEN	0.2	—
Bayernpartei – BP	0.2	—
Die Violetten: Für Spirituelle Politik – DIE VIOLETTEN	0.2	—
(Wählergemeinschaft): Gerechtigkeit Braucht Bürgerrechte – Wir Danken Für Ihr Vertrauen! FÜR VOLKSENTSCHEIDE	0.2	—
Christliche Mitte: Für Ein Deutschland Nach Gottes Geboten – CM	0.2	—
Partei Für Arbeit, Umwelt Und Familie-Christen Für Deutschland – AUF	0.1	—
Aufbruch Für Bürgerrechte, Freiheit Und Gesundheit – AUFBRUCH	0.1	—
Freie Bürger Initiative – FBI	0.1	—
Deutsche Kommunistische Partei – DKP	0.1	—
Newropeans	0.1	—
Europa-Demokratie-Esperanto – EDE	0.04	—
Bürgerrechtsbewegung Solidarität – Büso	0.04	—
Partei Der Sozialen Gleichheit-Sektion Der Vierten Internationale – PSG	0.035	—
Total	100	

Source: *Bundeswahlleiter* (2009) www.Bundeswahlleiter.De/De/Europawahlen/.

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Table 5.7 The German MEPs' affiliation to the European parliamentary groups

Political Party	*%*	*Seats*	*EPP*	*S&D*	*ALDE*	*Greens/EFA*	*ECR*	*EUL/NGL*	*EFD*	*NA*
CDU	30.7	42	42	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
SPD	20.8	23	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bündnis 90/Die Grünen	12.1	14	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—
FDP	11	12	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—
Die Linke	7.5	8	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	—
CSU	7.2	9	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Others	10.7	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	100	108	51	23	12	14	—	8	—	—

Source: European Parliament website: www.europarl.eu.

The remaining 26 parties failed to achieve representation, as they together attained a mere 10.8 per cent of the vote, with seven of them scoring more than 0.5 per cent and four over one per cent, notably the citizens' list *Freie Wähler* (FW) with 1.7 per cent, the *Republikaner* with 1.3 per cent, the *Tierschutzpartei* with 1.1 per cent and the *Familienpartei* with one per cent (*Bundeswahlleiter*, 2009).

9.4 Campaign finance

Germany boasts a generous public party financing system, which clearly shows the tendency towards a cartelization of politics and the institutionalization of a party state (Katz and Mair, 1995). For the first four million voters, a party gets €0.85, afterwards €0.70. The main condition is that the party achieves at least 0.5 per cent of the vote. Moreover, the parties get an additional €0.38 for each euro donated or each euro membership fee paid every year. The annual ceiling for public party financing is €133 million and payment is undertaken after the submission of an accountability report on 1 December of each year (Korte, 2009).

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The costs of the 2009 EP campaign amounted to €10 million for the CDU, €9 million for the SPD, €1.4 million for the FDP, €1 million for the Greens ,and about €3.4 million for *Die Linke* (*Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg*, 2009).

German political parties invested less funding in European elections – a large part coming from the public purse – in comparison to federal elections. All parties, except the Left Party and the CSU, devoted about half of the resources they would employ in federal elections. As shown in Figure 5.3, in the case of the SPD three times less funding was disbursed at Euro-elections.

Since 1979 a declining spending trend has been detected over Euro-campaigning in order to make a profit out of the generous public funding system. Figure 5.3 shows that similar costs were registered at the EP and national elections held in 1983 and 1984, yet over time a difference emerged. On average, in Euro-elections, the parliamentary parties disbursed just one-third of what they would normally have disbursed at general elections. Finally, parties did not resort to external marketing agencies in order to organize their Euro-campaigns and considerably reduced the costs of consulting experts (Niedermayer, 2005, 47–50).

10 Theoretical interpretation of Euro-elections

10.1 Second-Order Election theory

The German case seems to validate the hypothesis of the Second-Order Election theory relating to the lower participation of citizens in EP elections in comparison with federal general elections, even if this aspect did not become more prominent in 2009.

Table 5.8 List of German MEPs: seventh legislature

Name	*National party*	*Political group*	*Professional background*	*Year of birth*	*Gender*	*Committee chairs*
Balz, Burkhard	CDU	EPP	Banking salesmen	1969	Male	
Böge, Reimer			Farmer Agronomy engineer	1951	Male	
Brok, Elmar			Journalist, professional politician	1946	Male	Delegation relations with USA
Caspary, Daniel			Economist	1976	Male	
Ehler, Christian			Manager	1963	Male	Delegation relations with Korean peninsula
Ferber, Markus			Engineer	1965	Male	
Florenz, Karl-Heinz			Salesman	1947	Male	
Gahler, Michael			Diplomat	1960	Male	Delegation Panafrican Parliament
Grässle, Inge			Journalist	1961	Female	
Jahr, Dieter Peter			Economist	1959	Male	
Elisabeth, Jeggle			Farmer	1947	Female	
Klaß, Christa			Rural enterprise manager	1951	Female	
Koch, Dieter Lebrecht			Architect	1953	Male	
Kuhn, Werner			Entrepreneur	1941	Male	
Langen, Werner			Economist	1949	Male	Delegation for relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
Lechner, Kurt			Notary	1942	Male	
Lehne, Klaus Heiner			Lawyer	1957	Male	Conference of Committee Chairs and Committee on Legal Affairs
Liese, Peter			Physician	1965	Male	
Mann, Thomas			Industrial salesman	1946	Male	
Mayer, Hans-Peter			Lawyer	1944	Male	
Pack, Doris			Local councillor	1942	Female	Culture and education
Pieper, Markus			Manager	1963	Male	Vice-president regional development
Pöttering, Hans-Gert			Lawyer	1945	Male	
Quisthoudt-Rowohlt, Godelieve			Chemist	1947	Female	
Reul, Herbert			School teacher	1957	Male	Industry, research, and energy

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Table 5.8 (continued)

Name	*National party*	*Political group*	*Professional background*	*Year of birth*	*Gender*	*Committee chairs*
Schnellhard, Horst			Veterinarian	1946	Male	
Schnieber-jastram, Birgit			Publishing house editor	1946	Female	
Schwab, Andreas			Civil servant	1973	Male	
Sommer, Renate			Agricultural engineer	1958	Female	
Ulmer, Thomas			Physician	1956	Male	
Verheyen, Sabine			Local councillor, Mayor of Aachen	1964	Female	
Voss, Axel			Lawyer	1963	Male	
Wieland, Rainer			Lawyer	1957	Male	
Winkler, Herman			Engineer, local Councillor	1963	Male	
Zeller, Joachim			Librarian	1952	Male	
Deß, Albert	CSU		Farmer	1947	Male	
Ferber, Markus			Engineer	1965	Male	
Hohlmeier, Monika			Hotelier	1962	Female	
Kastler, Martin			Journalist	1974	Male	
Niebler, Angelika			Lawyer	1963	Female	Delegation of relations with Arabic peninsula
Posselt, Bernd			Journalist	1956	Male	
Weber, Manfred			Engineer	1972	Male	
Weisgerber, Anja			Professional politician	1976	Female	
Bullmann, Udo	SPD	S&D	University Lecturer	1956	Male	
Ertug, Ismail			Health Insurance Consultant, Local Councillor	1975	Male	
Fleckenstein, Knut			Manager	1953	Male	Delegation EU-Russian Parliamentary Cooperation Committee
Gebhardt, Evelyne			Lecturer	1954	Male	
Geier, Jens			Party functionary	1961	Male	
Glante, Norbert			Electronic engineer	1952	Male	Vice-president of Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly
Groote, Matthias			Industrial engineer	1973	Male	

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Haug, Jutta			Local councillor, Professional politician	1951	Female	Special Committee on the Policy Challenges and Budgetary Resources for a Sustainable European Union after 2013 Vice-president budgets
Kammerevert, Petra			Professional politician	1966	Female	
Krehl, Constanze Angela			IT specialist	1956	Female	
Kreissl-dorfler, Wolfgang			Farmer, qualified social science teacher	1950	Male	
Lange, Bernd			School teacher	1955	Male	
Leinen, Jo			Professional politician	1948	Male	Environment, public health and food safety
Neuser, Norbert			Head school teacher	1949	Male	
Rapkay, Bernhard			Public relations officer	1951	Male	
Rodust, Ulrike			Business administrator	1949	Female	
Roth-behrendt, Dagmar			Civil servant	1953	Female	Vice-president European Parliament
Schulz, Martin			Bookshop owner	1955	Male	
Simon, Peter			Lawyer, civil servant	1967	Male	
Sippel, Birgit			Trade union officer	1960	Female	
Steinruck, Jutta			Personnel manager	1962	Female	
Weiler, Barbara			Industrial manager	1946	Female	
Westphal, Kerstin			Nursery teacher	1962	Female	
Albrecht, Jan Philip	*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*	Greens/ European Free Alliance	Student	1982	Male	
Brantner, Franziska			University lecturer	1979	Female	
Bütikofer, Reinhard			Professional politician	1953	Male	
Cramer, Michael			School teacher	1949	Male	
Giegold, Sven			Professional politician	1969	Male	
Häfner, Gerald			Journalist	1956	Male	Vice-president Delegation Korean peninsula
Harms, Rebecca			Landscape gardener	1956	Female	
Häusling, Martin			Farmer	1961	Male	
Keller, Franziska			Professional politician	1981	Female	
Lochbihler, Barbara			Social worker	1959	Female	Delegation with welations with Iran
Rühle, Heide			Psychologist	1948	Female	
Schroedter, Elisabeth			Business director	1959	Female	Vice-president Employment and social affairs

(continued)

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Table 5.8 (continued)

Name	*National party*	*Political group*	*Professional background*	*Year of birth*	*Gender*	*Committee chairs*
Schulz, Werner			Engineer	1950	Male	Vice-president Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee
Trüpel, Helga			Professional politician	1958	Female	Vice-President culture and education and Special Committee on the Policy Challenges and Budgetary Resources for a Sustainable European Union after 2013
Alvaro, Alexander	FDP	ALDE	Banking salesman	1975	Male	Vice-president budget
Chatzimarkakis, Georgios			Civil servant, manager	1966	Male	Delegation to the EU-Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Joint Parliamentary Committee
Creutzmann, Jürgen			Chartered accountant	1945	Male	
Hirsch, Nadja			Business mediator	1978	Female	
Klinz, Wolf			Business administrator	1941	Male	Special Committee on the Financial, Economic and Social Crisis
Koch-mehrin, Silvana			Business consultant	1970	Female	Vice-President European Parliament
Krahmer, Holger			Banking salesman	1970	Male	Vice-President delegation of relations with Arabic peninsula
Lambsdorff, Alexander Graf			Diplomat	1966	Male	
Meissner, Gesine			Communication instructor	1952	Female	
Reimers, Britta			Farmer	1971	Female	
Thein, Alexandra			Lawyer	1963	Female	
Theurer, Michael			Newspaper editor	1967	Male	
Bisky, Lothar	*Die Linke*	EUL/NGL	University lecturer	1941	Male	Vice-president culture and education
Ernst, Cornelia			Instructor	1956	Female	Vice-President delegation of relations with Iran
Händel, Thomas			Electrician	1953	Male	
Klute, Jürgen			Pastor	1953	Male	
Lösing, Sabine			Social worker	1955	Female	
Scholz, Helmut			Diplomat	1954	Male	
Wils, Sabine			Midwife	1959	Female	
Zimmer, Gabriele			Translator	1955	Female	

Source: European Parliament website: www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/search.html?country=DE

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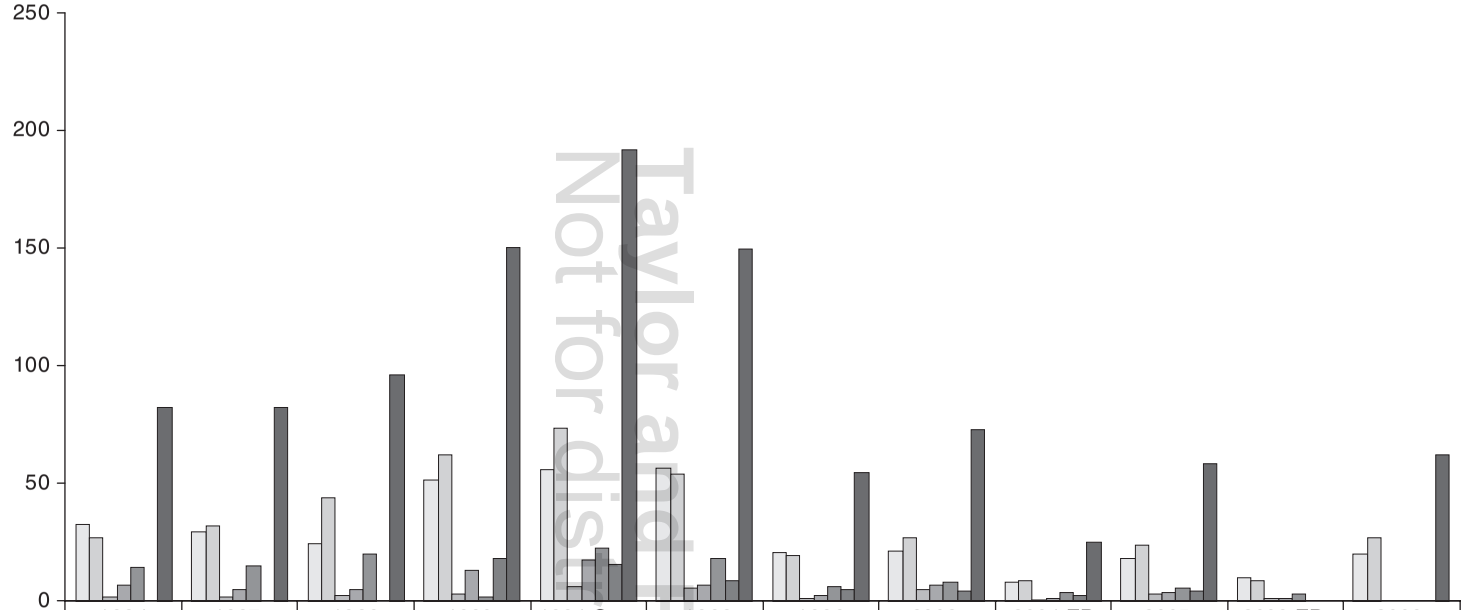

	1984 EPDM	1987 Gen.DM	1989 EPDM	1990 Gen.DM	1994 Gen. +EPDM	1998 Gen.DM	1999 EPDM	2002 Gen.Euros	2004 EP Euros	2005 Gen.Euros	2009 EP Euros	2009 Gen.Euros
CDU	32.6	29.4	24.5	51.5	56	56.6	20.7	21.5	8.4	18.3	10	20
SPD	26.8	31.8	44.1	61.9	73.7	54	19.4	26.8	9	23.7	9	27
Green party	1.8	1.5	2.4	2.7	6.1	5.4	1.2	4.7	0.42	3.1	1	
FDP	6.9	4.8	5.3	13.3	17.5	6.8	2.3	6.8	1.2	4	1.4	
CSU	14.4	15	19.8	2	22.7	18.4	6.2	8.2	3.6	5.4	3.4	
PDS/Die Linke				18.5	15.7	8.6	4.9	4.7	2.7	4.2		
Total	82.5	82.5	96.1	149.9	191.7	149.8	54.7	73	25.3	58.7		62

Figure 5.3 National and EP election campaign expenditure in Germany: 1984–2009

Source: *Deutscher Bundestag* 1984; 1985; 1988; 1990; 1992; 1995; 2000a; 2000b; 2004; 2006; 2007; Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 23 August 2005; *Die Welt*, 6 September 2009

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A higher voting share of small and new political parties at the cost of the larger established parties was also corroborated (Treschel, 2009). In addition, the defeat of governing parties could be generally registered in Euro-elections. In particular in 2009, the most dramatic result was the loss of over 1.3 million voters by the CDU that went in a large part to the FDP (Infratest Dimap, 2009, 8; see also Treschel, 2009). The SPD's performance was even worse than in the 2004 European election and in the 2005 general election, which at the time was seen as an expression of protest against the government led by Chancellor Schröder and the so-called 'Agenda 2010'. The SPD did not manage to mobilize its former voters and had to face an all-time low in elections for the second time in a row.

The effects of the timing of the EP contest in the national electoral cycle could also be noticed. Euro-elections in Germany, held at the end of the electoral cycle starting in 2005, were quite a dress rehearsal for the subsequent general elections that took place on 27 September 2009. This meant that the results reached at the European elections were almost the same as those of the federal elections. The two largest parties were punished in the European elections, whilst the smaller parliamentary parties were able to improve their score.

However, the Second-Order Election theory cannot really explain the poor performance of the German Social-Democrats, the junior partner of the then coalition government, which had an even worse result than the abysmal one in 2004 and reiterated its low score in the general elections.

As Simon Hix has argued, the loss of the mainstream parties on the centre-left stemmed from their adoption of economic mainstays, such as high public spending, similar to those proposed by their political rivals. As a result, 'voters c[ould not] tell the difference between the centre-right and centre-left, and centre-right leaders in many countries look[ed] younger, fresher and more competent than centre-left leaders' (Hix, 2009, 5).

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10.2 Europe Salience theory

Although 'Europe matters' in the German debates, overtly such questions were never likely to play a very prominent role in the agenda of political parties or in influencing voters' choices, with the exception of the FDP and the Greens. These parties, which actually put greater emphasis on the European Union in their manifestos, increased their voting share at the 2009 European election in relation to the 2005 legislative election. As a result, it could be argued that empirical evidence for the Europe Salience theory appears rather mixed.

Moreover, the hypothesis that anti-EU parties perform better in European elections could not be confirmed. In 2009, *Die Linke*, commonly regarded as the most German Eurosceptic party and long seen as likely to profit from the economic crisis due to its fierce criticism of the EU model, lost votes compared to the previous election. The two right-wing extremist parties which were strongly against the European integration project, the DVU and the *Republikaner*, failed to reach the nationwide five-per-cent threshold at the 2009 Euro-election.

Even if a more sceptical agenda for European integration has emerged (Harnisch and Schieder, 2006), there is no radical right-wing extremist party supporting a Eurosceptic agenda with a chance of being represented in the *Bundestag* or in the European Parliament in the short term (Lees, 2008). The most plausible working hypothesis to understand the German Euro-elections from the perspective of Europe Salience theory is that Green parties receive a greater increase in their vote share compared to other parties and in relation to previous national elections. The Greens represent a well-established party and are usually successful in European elections. German voters, concerned about environmental issues and aware of the importance of the European Parliament in the EU institutional framework, are likely to switch their vote to the Green party in a European election.

Over the years, whereas all political parties in Germany have been supportive of the European integration process, the population has become less pro-European. As a result, turnout in EP elections has been consistently lower than that at national elections. Overall, Germany seems to fit more in the Second-Order Election theory than in the Europe Salience model for the following reasons. Although European issues are raised at European Parliament elections, they are framed through national lenses. In addition, political parties spend less of their funding on such electoral contests and they even gain a profit out of the generous public funding system, in order to finance national elections that are considered to be far more important. Finally, political parties regard EP elections as a dress rehearsal for the forthcoming legislative elections. Against this background, it has to be pointed out that Euro-elections have become quite established in the multilevel governance electoral system in Germany, thus playing a crucial role as the trendsetter within the national electoral cycle.

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