

## LABORATORY

### SEMINAR 2

# MEPs' Activism Operationalization: Practical application

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***EUREact***

***Jean Monnet Module, AA 2017/2018***

## Parliamentary Monitoring Organisations (PMOs)

PMOs explore ever-closer relationships and interaction between governments and the people in modern democracies

Favored by the growth of information and communication technologies (ICTs)

Potential usages:

- Commercial
- Political transparency and accountability
- Civic participation
- Curb corruption and bureaucracy

Three types of PMOs: (1) Information about MPs and parties (2) legislative data and (3) budget & administration management data

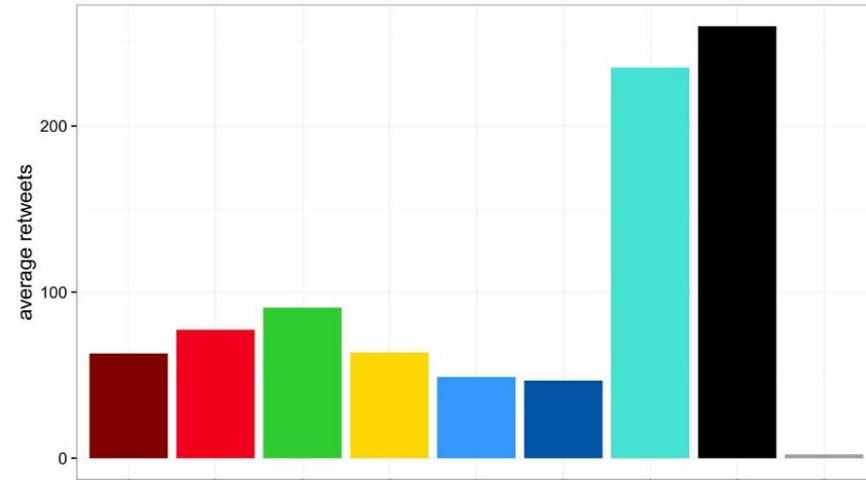
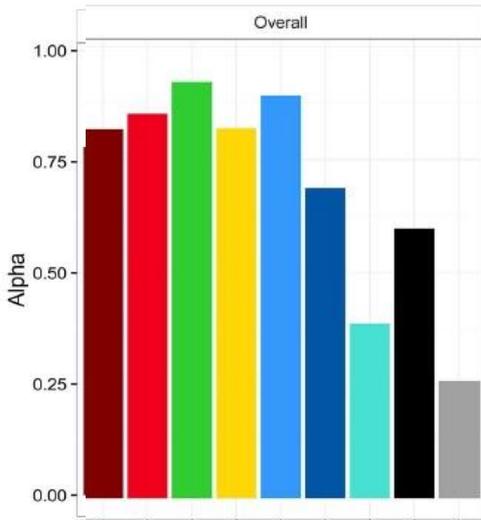
## FINDING DATA: EP PARLIAMENTARY INFORMATICS

1. <http://www.votewatch.eu/> → since 2004, has displayed full records of MEPs voting, attendance and other activities (parliamentary questions, speeches, reports etc.) & coalitions' statistics (via paid subscription)
2. <http://www.thinkingabout.eu/> → analyses MEPs mainly by their most used keywords and connections both online and offline (membership, social connections, collaborations) & MEPs matchmaking
3. <http://www.mepranking.eu/> → ranks MEPs by state, committee, etc.
4. <https://www.clarin.si/repository/xmlui/handle/11356/1071#> → dataset for RCVs and (re)tweets

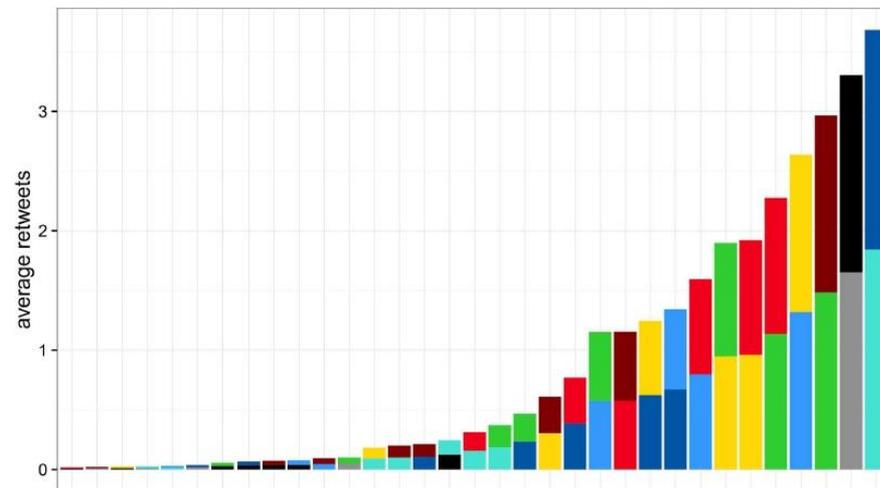
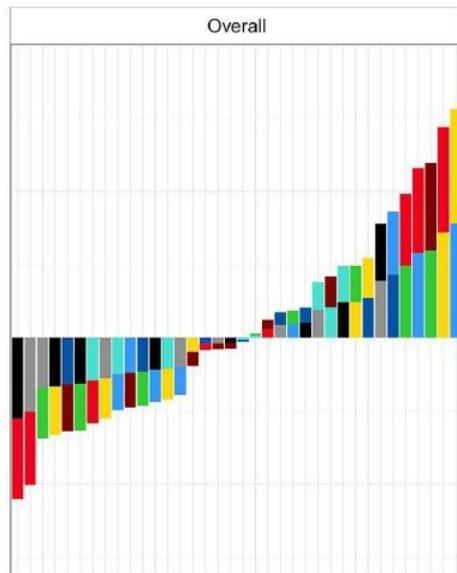
Other datasets are outdated or inactive!

# An academic example (Cherepnalkoski et al., 2016)

R  
C  
V  
S



R  
E  
T  
W  
E  
E  
T  
S



# DATA PROCESSING

- 1. Statistical software** for data analysis (e.g. STATA, IBM SPSS, R); useful for advanced observation through the usage statistical tools such as regressions etc.
- 2. Microsoft Excel** → useful e.g. for descriptive analysis of voting trends and behaviour amongst MEPs, EPGs, national parties, national delegations, “voting coalitions” within the EP and much more!

**LET'S MAKE A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE!**

## PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

**Research Question:** “Do Eurosceptic parties in the 8<sup>th</sup> EP vote in a cohesive way? How much does their behaviour differ from pro-European parties?”

**Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** “Eurosceptic parties do tend to vote in a cohesive manner within the EP”.

Questions:

- Which method? What to measure? Which activities?
- How do I measure whether a party is Eurosceptic or not?
- How do I operationalize voting in the 8<sup>th</sup> EP?
- How do I aggregate votes by political party?
- How do I aggregate Eurosceptic and non-Eurosceptic votes in the 8<sup>th</sup> EP?
- Which areas/countries should I include/exclude?

## Which method? What to measure? Which activities?

**Quantitative:** numerical or statistical data which can be quantified and measured in numbers/units;

**What:** e.g. attendance, roll call votes (RCVs), documents in plenary, etc.

**How:** data from EP website, other datasets or web tools

**Qualitative:** descriptive or theoretical data which is non-numerical in nature

**What:** e.g. constituencies, national party, media, campaign, etc.

**How:** interviews, text analysis

## How do I measure whether a party is Eurosceptic or not?

**Expert Surveys** → e.g. Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) and/or European Election Studies (EES)

In expert surveys, country experts were asked to place parties in their own country on a scale with respect to a whole series of topics and elements (other expert surveys include EES, etc.)

**Manifesto Analysis** → Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP)

Provides parties' policy positions derived from a content analysis of parties' electoral manifestos.

## How do I select votes in the 8th EP?

The most used tool in order to analyse voting trends in the EP from the **quantitative** point of view goes through the analysis of **RCVs**.

**CONS:** RCVs roughly represent a third of the total votes + accusation of bias made by various scholars

**PROS:** although representing only a minoritarian part of the total, RCVs are nonetheless the most preferable tool (at the moment) in order to effectively evaluate MEPs behaviour within the EP

## How do I operationalize votes in the 8th EP?

e.g. NOMINATE method (Hix, “Parliamentary Behavior with Two Principals”, 2002) → creation of a binominal “YES/NO” variable

*“[...] Where voting is by a simple majority, abstaining is the equivalent of not participating in the vote, as it has no effect on the outcome. But, where voting is by an absolute majority, abstaining is the same as voting ‘no’, as any vote that is not a ‘yes’ undermines the ability of securing the required 314 ‘yes’ votes for the act or resolution to be passed. Hence [...] the abstentions were coded as the same as a ‘no’ vote” (Hix, 2002)*

In short: abstain/no vote/non-participation = **YES** in **simple majority**, **NO** in **absolute majority**

## How do I aggregate votes by political party?

VoteWatch does not have a section dedicated to votes aggregated by national political party → manual collapsing of MEPs according to partisan allegiance.

All other categories (EPGs, National Delegations, etc.) are available

Hint! → there are various ways to “bypass” the system, such as going to the *html* version of the page and exporting it into Excel, but the results do not always satisfy the expectations of the user!

## How do I aggregate Eurosceptic and non-Eurosceptic votes?

This goes according to the literature taken into consideration:

Taggart, “A Touchstone of Dissent” (1998):

- **Soft-Eurosceptic:** qualified opposition to the process of European integration → oppose determined policies
- **Hard Eurosceptic:** contingent opposition to the process of European integration → complete rejection of the EU as a whole

A whole plethora of definitions have been made in the last twenty years → Kopecký and Mudde (2002), Flood (2002), Lubbers and Scheepers (2005), Krouwel and Abts (2007), Vasilopoulou (2011) → which one to choose?



## Which areas/countries should I include/exclude?

**Areas:** sorted by committee → Constitutional Affairs (AFCO), Budget (BUDG), Agriculture (AGRI), etc.

**Countries:** West v. East, Core v. Periphery, Mediterranean v. Nordic, etc.

Other **variables** that can be included:

- *Left v. Right;*
- *GAL v. TAN;*
- *Winners v. Losers;*
- etc.

## Main contemporary cleavages (Hooge & Marks, 2016)

- **Traditional Economic left v. Traditional Economic right** → *State Interventionism vs. Pro-Market policies;*
- **Materialism vs. Post-Materialism** → *material security vs. self-expression, freedom of speech, gender equality, environment*
- **Nativism vs. integrationism** → *anti-immigration vs. pro-integration policies*
- **Integrationist vs. Sovereignist** → *Europeanism vs. Euroscepticism*
- **GAL vs. TAN** → *ecology, alternative politics (e.g. participatory democracy), libertarianism vs. traditional values, opposition to immigration, and defense of the national community*
- **Winners vs. Losers** (globalization, internationalization, European integration, etc.) → *those who benefited vs. those who were harmed and/or excluded by the aforementioned processes*

## MY EXAMPLE

- Areas: all areas
- Countries: all EU countries
- MEPs: all MEPs
- Time : 6/2014 – 12/2016
- Total RCVs observed: 981 (Simple: 856; Absolute: 125)
- Method: Quantitative (Expert survey: CHES & EES)
- Vote operationalization: NOMINATE method

Separation between Eurosceptic and non-Eurosceptic:

*“A given party is to be considered Eurosceptic when its EU position is at least half standard deviation below the mean EU stance of all parties in that system”*

Other variable: left vs. right (CHES) → Radical left: 0-2; Moderate left: 2-4; Centre: 4-6; Moderate Right: 6-8; Far Right: 8-10

## 1.1. Austria

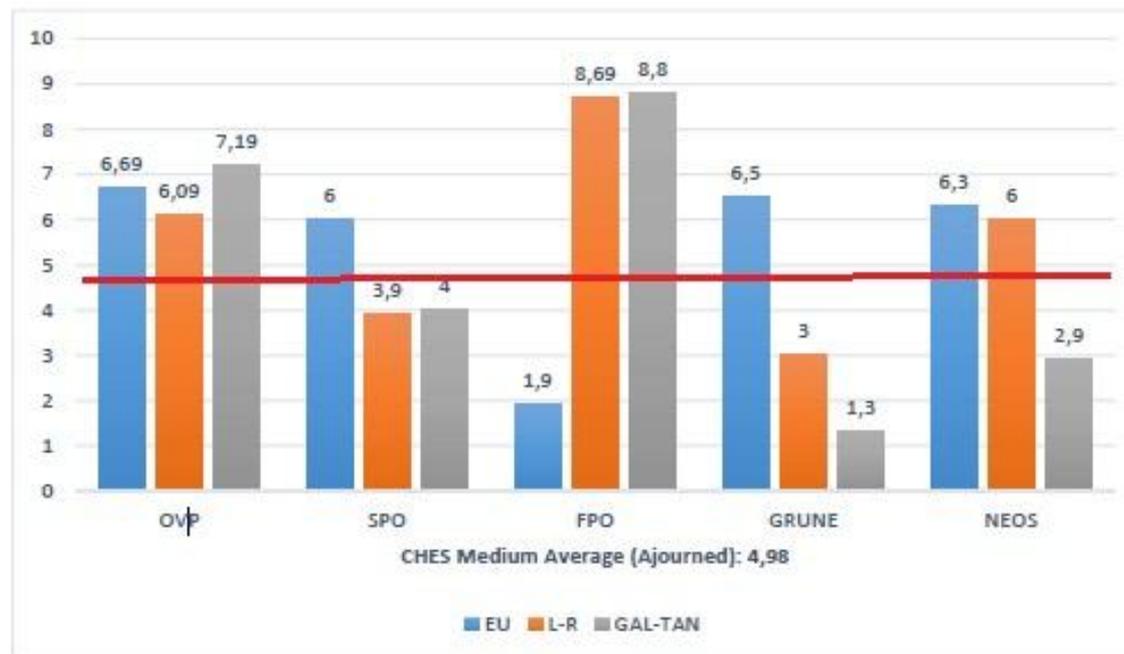


Figure 1.

Source: CHES dataset, EES Euromanifesto dataset.

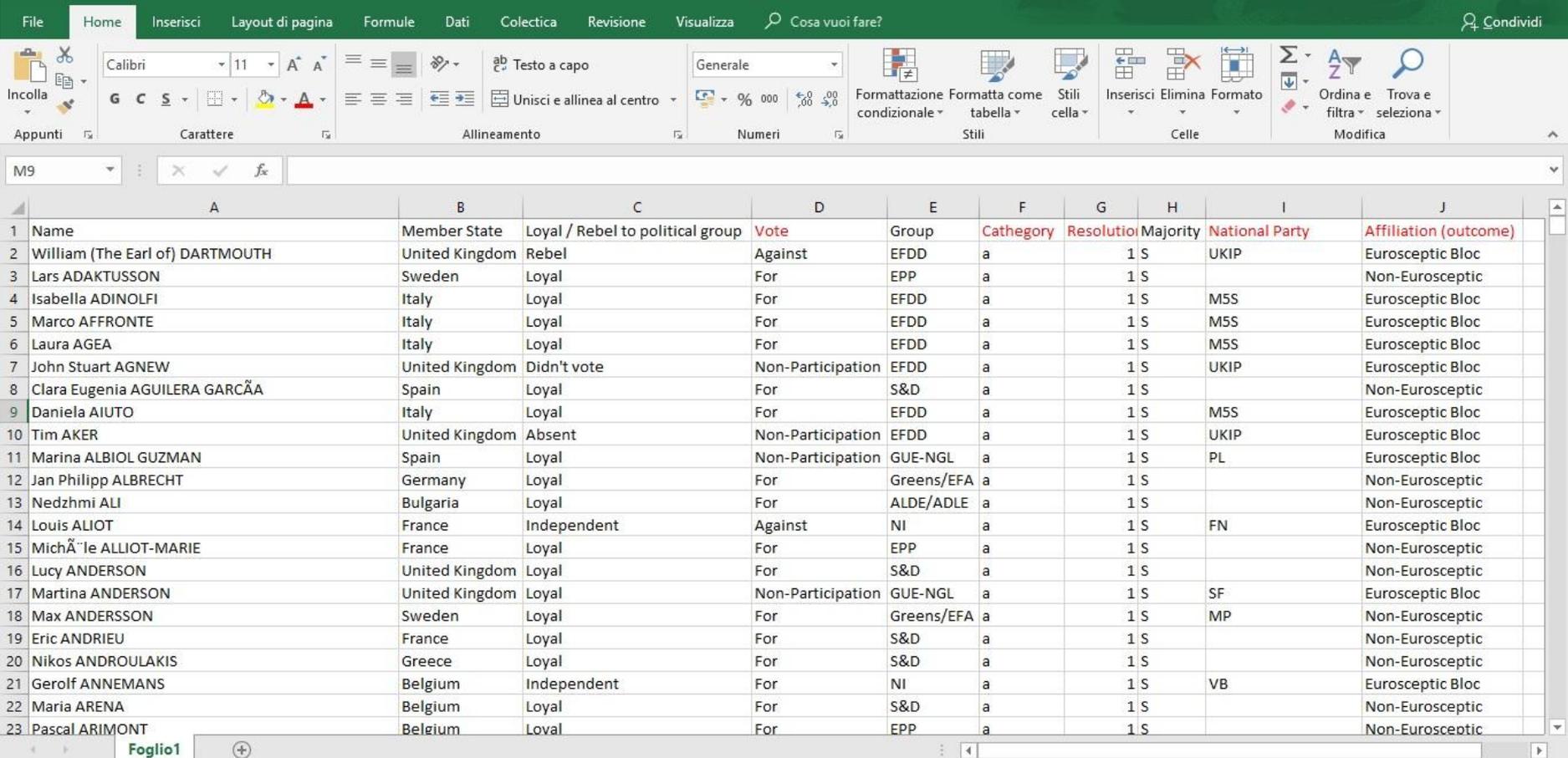
# THE EUROSCOPTIC AREA



Party	Seats	Country	EP Group (2014)	EP Group (2016)	CHES	CHES MA)	L-R	GAL- TAN	EES
FPO	4	AUS	NI	ENF	1,9	4,98	8,69	8,8	-11,11
VB	1	BEL	NI	ENF	2,59	5,3	9,19	9	-28,42
BBT	1	BUL	ECR	ECR	4,53	5,23	6,08	7,45	2,38
VMRO	1	BUL	ECR	ECR	3,31	5,23	6,08	8,62	2,38
HSP AS	1	CRO	ECR	ECR	3,62	5,39	9	9,25	0,76
AKEL	2	CYP	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	4,5	5,12	2	3,25	-3,75
KSCM	3	CZH	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	2,73	3,98	1,07	6,57	-0,65
ODS	2	CZH	ECR	ECR	2,86	3,98	8	6	-14,7
SVOBODNI	1	CZH	EFDD	EFDD	1,33	3,98	8,71	4,86	-35,14
DF	4	DK	ECR	ECR	1,9	4,06	6,9	8,4	-27,11
FOLKB	1	DK	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	1,09	4,06	2	2,75	-19,9
PS	2	FIN	ECR	ECR	1,6	4,38	5,1	9,1	-19,23
VAS	1	FIN	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	4,3	4,38	1,88	1,88	4,03
FN	24	FRA	NI	ENF	1,21	4,46	9,64	8,92	-13,23
PCF (FG)	4	FRA	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	2,64	4,46	1,75	3,9	-8,78
PG (FG)		FRA	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	2,08	4,46	1,7	2,4	-8,78
AFD	7	GER	ECR	ENF- EFDD/ECR	1,61	4,38	8,92	8,69	-10,08
CSU	5	GER	EPP	EPP	4,84	4,38	7,23	7,92	-11,95
Die PARTEI	1	GER	NI	NI		4,38	N	N	-7,69
LINKE	7	GER	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	3	4,38	1,23	4,92	4,24
NPD	1	GER	NI	NI	1,6	4,38	10	9,82	-5,1
ODP	1	GER	G/EFA	G/EFA	N	4,38	N	N	-4,01
ANEL	1	GRE	ECR	ECR	2,22	3,99	8,77	8,55	-28,57
KKE	2	GRE	NI	NI	1,11	3,99	0,66	5,77	-7,79
SYRIZA	6	GRE	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	3,44	3,99	2	2,11	-8,03
XA	3	GRE	NI	NI	1,11	3,99	9,88	10	-19,02
FIDESZ	11	HUN	EPP	EPP	2,71	4,27	7,93	8,64	-4,25
JOBBIK	3	HUN	NI	NI	1,21	4,27	9,71	9,5	-13,82



SF	4	IRE	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	2,77	4,66	2,12	5,12	-10,67
FI	13	ITA	EPP	EPP	3,43	3,41	6,71	7,28	-2,32
LN	5	ITA	NI	ENF	1,14	3,41	8,85	9,14	-30,99
MSS	17	ITA	EFDD	EFDD	1,42	3,41	4,66	2,57	0
RC (AET)	3	ITA	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	2	3,41	0,28	1	0,32
SEL (AET)		ITA	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	3,14	3,41	1,28	0,28	0,32
LKS	1	LAT	G/EFA	G/EFA	2,88	4,41	3,25	8,28	9,52
SDPS	1	LAT	S&D	S&D	4,2	4,41	4	7	10,25
LLRA	1	LIT	ECR	ECR	4,21	4,77	5,46	8,86	21,73
LVZS	1	LIT	G/EFA	G/EFA	4,69	4,77	3,86	6,16	-0,69
TT	2	LIT	EFDD	EFDD	3,2	4,77	6,61	8,28	-2,89
CU	1	NED	ECR	ECR	3,44	3,74	5,44	7,66	-3,33
PVDD	1	NED	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	3,71	3,74	2,88	2,33	-8,18
PVV	4	NED	NI	ENF	1,09	3,74	9,25	7,77	-33,96
SGP	1	NED	ECR	ECR	2,55	3,74	8,11	9,44	-3,33
SP	2	NED	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	2,09	3,74	1	4,11	-12,41
KNP	4	POL	NI	ENF/NI	1,06	4,19	9,53	8,82	-64
PIS	19	POL	ECR	ECR	3,82	4,19	7,94	8,47	-4,17
BE	1	POR	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	3,12	4,12	1,33	0,66	-8,96
CDU	3	POR	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	1,87	4,12	0,5	4,16	-8,91
MPT	2	POR	ALDE	ALDE/EPP	3,4	4,12	6,75	6,33	-2,98
NOVA	1	SLK	ECR	ECR	4,28	4,52	7,07	7,08	-1,58
OLANO	1	SLK	ECR	ECR	3	4,52	6,5	8,08	10,69
SAS	1	SLK	ALDE	ECR	2,86	4,52	7,28	2,78	-9,25
ICV (PL)	1	SPA	G/EFA	G/EFA	4,8	6,02	2,11	0,88	-3,01
IU (PL)	5	SPA	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	4,6	6,02	2	1,4	-3,01
LPD	1	SPA	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL		6,02	N	N	-7,2
PODEMOS	5	SPA	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	4,44	6,02	1,66	1,75	1,69
F!	1	SWE	S&D	S&D	3,16	4,03	1,81	0,8	0
MP	4	SWE	G/EFA	G/EFA	4,4	4,03	3,28	1,62	-3,84
SD	2	SWE	EFDD	EFDD	1,27	4,03	7,76	9,24	-23,18
V	1	SWE	GUE/NGL	GUE/NGL	2,14	4,03	1,71	1,95	-19,31
CONS	19	UK	ECR	ECR	3,14	4,36	7	6,14	-9,83
DUP	1	UK	NI	NI	N	4,36	N	N	-2,61
UKIP	24	UK	EFDD	EFDD	1,14	4,36	9,14	9,28	-3,125
UUP	1	UK	ECR	ECR	N	4,36	N	N	-4,65



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Name	Member State	Loyal / Rebel to political group	Vote	Group	Category	Resolution	Majority	National Party	Affiliation (outcome)
2	William (The Earl of) DARTMOUTH	United Kingdom	Rebel	Against	EFDD	a	1 S		UKIP	Eurosceptic Bloc
3	Lars ADAKTUSSON	Sweden	Loyal	For	EPP	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
4	Isabella ADINOLFI	Italy	Loyal	For	EFDD	a	1 S		M5S	Eurosceptic Bloc
5	Marco AFFRONTE	Italy	Loyal	For	EFDD	a	1 S		M5S	Eurosceptic Bloc
6	Laura AGEA	Italy	Loyal	For	EFDD	a	1 S		M5S	Eurosceptic Bloc
7	John Stuart AGNEW	United Kingdom	Didn't vote	Non-Participation	EFDD	a	1 S		UKIP	Eurosceptic Bloc
8	Clara Eugenia AGUILERA GARCÍA	Spain	Loyal	For	S&D	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
9	Daniela AIUTO	Italy	Loyal	For	EFDD	a	1 S		M5S	Eurosceptic Bloc
10	Tim AKER	United Kingdom	Absent	Non-Participation	EFDD	a	1 S		UKIP	Eurosceptic Bloc
11	Marina ALBIOL GUZMAN	Spain	Loyal	Non-Participation	GUE-NGL	a	1 S		PL	Eurosceptic Bloc
12	Jan Philipp ALBRECHT	Germany	Loyal	For	Greens/EFA	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
13	Nedzhmi ALI	Bulgaria	Loyal	For	ALDE/ADLE	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
14	Louis ALIOT	France	Independent	Against	NI	a	1 S		FN	Eurosceptic Bloc
15	Michelle ALLIOT-MARIE	France	Loyal	For	EPP	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
16	Lucy ANDERSON	United Kingdom	Loyal	For	S&D	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
17	Martina ANDERSON	United Kingdom	Loyal	Non-Participation	GUE-NGL	a	1 S		SF	Eurosceptic Bloc
18	Max ANDERSSON	Sweden	Loyal	For	Greens/EFA	a	1 S		MP	Non-Eurosceptic
19	Eric ANDRIEU	France	Loyal	For	S&D	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
20	Nikos ANDROULAKIS	Greece	Loyal	For	S&D	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
21	Gerolf ANNEMANS	Belgium	Independent	For	NI	a	1 S		VB	Eurosceptic Bloc
22	Maria ARENA	Belgium	Loyal	For	S&D	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic
23	Pascal ARIMONT	Belgium	Loyal	For	EPP	a	1 S			Non-Eurosceptic

For your information, the vote of all MEPs in all RCVs observed makes for a total of 736.131 votes!

## RESULTS

	<b>TOT</b>	<b>EES</b>	<b>CHES</b>	<b>EES + CHES</b>
<b>E = NE</b>	49,31%	60,40%	59,28%	45,55%
<b>E vs. NE</b>	50,69%	39,60%	40,72%	54,45%

Results show that Eurosceptic parties seem to vote half of the time along non-Eurosceptics!

## RESULTS: COHESION

<b>% Cohesion</b>	<b>TOT</b>	<b>% TOT</b>	<b>TOT CHES</b>	<b>% TOT CHES</b>	<b>TOT EES</b>	<b>% TOT EES</b>	<b>TOT CHES+EES</b>	<b>% TOT CHES + EES</b>
<b>100-90</b>	2	0,20%	366	37,31%	261	26,61%	44	4,49%
<b>90-80</b>	15	1,53%	3	0,31%	1	0,10%	71	7,24%
<b>80-70</b>	62	6,32%	88	8,97%	241	24,57%	79	8,05%
<b>70-60</b>	87	8,87%	1	0,10%	6	0,61%	83	8,46%
<b>60-50</b>	97	9,89%	99	10,09%	130	13,25%	116	11,82%
<b>50-40</b>	92	9,38%	0	0,00%	9	0,92%	88	8,97%
<b>40-30</b>	90	9,17%	160	16,31%	157	16,00%	97	9,89%
<b>30-20</b>	152	15,49%	1	0,10%	7	0,71%	100	10,19%
<b>20-10</b>	182	18,55%	186	18,96%	166	16,92%	163	16,62%
<b>10-0</b>	202	20,59%	77	7,85%	3	0,31%	140	14,27%

Most of the time, Eurosceptic vote in complete disarray!

## RESULTS: LEFT v. RIGHT

MA (TOT)	E = NE	E vs. NE
RL	51,20%	48,80%
ML	69,52%	30,48%
C	52,40%	47,60%
MR	62,54%	37,46%
RR	30,50%	69,50%

Eurosceptic dissent is mostly concentrated in the far right!

## RESULTS: LEFT v. RIGHT (COHESION)

% Cohesion	RL	% RL	ML	% ML	C	% C	MR	% MR	RR	%RR		
<b>100-90</b>	516	52,60%	606	61,77%	(100-75)	(100-75)	427	43,53%	48	4,89%		
<b>90-80</b>	75	7,65%	1	0,10%			95	9,68%	57	5,81%		
<b>80-70</b>	129	13,15%	172	17,53%			459	46,79%	11	1,12%	68	6,93%
<b>70-60</b>	67	6,83%	6	0,61%	(75-50)	(75-50)	52	5,30%	96	9,79%		
<b>60-50</b>	69	7,03%					38	3,87%	48	4,89%	94	9,58%
<b>50-40</b>	47	4,79%	135	13,76%	(50-25)	(50-25)	43	4,38%	122	12,44%		
<b>40-30</b>	9	0,92%					234	23,85%	48	4,89%	113	11,52%
<b>30-20</b>	33	3,36%					4	0,41%	(25-0)	(25-0)	38	3,87%
<b>20-10</b>	15	1,53%	57	5,81%	250	25,48%	101	10,30%	100	10,19%		
<b>10-0</b>	21	2,14%					118	12,03%	71	7,24%		

Far right parties are also the most uncohesive!

# THE ACTIVISM INDEX

## OUTLINE

1. Index(es) building process
2. Presentation of works
3. Discussion

## The Activism Index (Ai) used for “Antenna Europarlamentare”

### “Ai” FORMULA

$$\left( \frac{I_1 \text{MEPscore}}{I_1 \text{PEmean}} + \dots + \frac{I_n \text{MEPscore}}{I_n \text{PEmean}} \right) : n$$

- $A_i > 1 \rightarrow$  IPER-ACTIVISM
- $A_i < 1 \rightarrow$  IPO-ACTIVISM

## EXAMPLE: ACTIVISM INDEX

MEP NAME

EP MEAN

Speeches: 50

Speeches: 70

Reports: 5

Reports: 12

Opinions: 10

Opinions: 20

Motions: 12

Motions: 10

Declarations: 2

Declarations: 4

Questions: 100

Questions: 120

$$[ 50/70 + 5/12 + 10/20 + 12/10 + 2/4 + 100/120 ] / 6 =$$

$$[0,71 + 0,42 + 0,5 + 1,2 + 0,5 + 0,83] / 6 =$$

$$4,28 / 6 = \mathbf{0,71} \rightarrow \text{IPO ACTIVISM}$$

## The index used by “MEPRanking”

### SCORE

$$\left( \frac{I_1 \text{MEPscore}}{I_1 \text{PEmax}} + \dots + \frac{I_n \text{MEPscore}}{I_n \text{PEmax}} \right) : n$$

- $i = 0 \rightarrow$  Min Activ. level
- $i = 1 \rightarrow$  Max Activ. level



## EXAMPLE: SCORE

MEP NAME

EP MAX

Speeches: 50

Speeches: 100

Reports: 5

Reports: 15

Opinions: 10

Opinions: 30

Motions: 12

Motions: 15

Declarations: 2

Declarations: 10

Questions: 100

Questions: 300

$$[ 50/100 + 5/15 + 10/30 + 12/15 + 2/10 + 100/300 ] / 6 =$$

$$[ 0,5 + 0,33 + 0,33 + 0,8 + 0,2 + 0,33 ] / 6 =$$

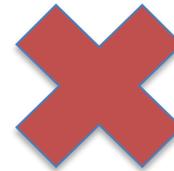
$$2,49 / 6 = \mathbf{0,41}$$



## COMPARISON OF INDEXES HAS NOT MEANING !

Activism index = 0,71

MEPRanking SCORE = 0,41





# PRESENTATION OF WORKS AND DISCUSSION



## PAPER OUTLINE

1. Observed MEPs. Which and Why?
2. Data and indicators description
3. Activism index construction method(s)
4. Observations and analysis (if possible crossing Activism variable and socio-political variables as age, gender, PE experience, national party, institutional role etc.)

