POLITICAL THOUGHT

YEAR 21, NUMBER 67, DECEMBER 2023, SKOPJE

67

POLITICAL THOUGHT

YEAR 21, No 67, DECEMBER, SKOPJE 2023

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG

IDSCS | Institute for Democracy Societas Civilis - Skopje

Publisher:

Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Republic of North Macedonia
Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis", Skopje

Founders:

Dr. Gjorge Ivanov, Andreas Klein M.A.

Politička misla - Editorial Board:

Daniel Braun	Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Germany
Nenad Marković	Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis", Political Science Department, Faculty of Law "Iustinianus I", Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia
Ivan Damjanovski	Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis", Political Science Department, Faculty of Law "Iustinianus I", Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia
Hans-Rimbert Hemmer	Emeritus Professor of Economics, University of Giessen, Germany
Claire Gordon	London School of Economy and Political Science, England
Robert Hislope	Political Science Department, Union College, USA
Ana Matan-Todorčevska	Faculty of Political Science, Zagreb University, Croatia
Predrag Cvetičanin	University of Niš, Republic of Serbia
Vladimir Misev	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Poland
Sandra Koljačkova	Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Republic of North Macedonia

Address:

KONRAD-ADENAUER-STIFTUNG
ul. Risto Ravanovski 8 MK - 1000 Skopje
Phone: 02 3217 075; Fax: 02 3217 076;
E-mail: Skopje@kas.de; Internet: www.kas.de

INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY "SOCIETAS CIVILIS" SKOPJE
Miroslav Krleža 52-1-2 MK - 1000 Skopje;
Phone/ Fax: 02 30 94 760; E-mail: contact@idscs.org.mk;
Internet: www.idscs.org.mk
E-mail: map@yahoogroups.com

Printing: Vincent grafika - Skopje
Design & Technical preparation: Pepi Damjanovski
Translation: Ognena Nikuljski, Marija Micevska Kokalanova, Tiina Fahrni, Perica Sardzoski
Macedonian Language Editor: Elena Sazdovska

**The views expressed in the magazine are not views of Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" Skopje. They are personal views of the authors. The publisher is not liable for any translation errors. The magazine is published 2 times a year and it is distributed to political subjects, state institutions, universities,
and foreign representatives in Republic of North Macedonia and troughout Europe. This publication is solely intended for information purposes. It may not be used by political parties or by election campaigners or supporters for the purpose of election advertising.**

Year 21, No 67, december
Skopje 2023
ISSN 1409-9853

Contents

IN SEARCH OF MAJORITIES 5

Olaf Wientzek

THE INFLUENCE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE CREATION OF THE NEW EUROPEAN POLITICAL ARCHITECTURE 21

Timco Mucunski

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN? 47

Ulrich Haltern

NGUYEN'S TILES - HOW INFLUENCERS BECOME AUTHORITIES 57

Annekathrin Kohout

LIKED - HOW MUCH AUTHORITY DOES ONE HAVE WITH 100.000 FOLLOWERS? 63

Amelie Duckwitz

FROM QUOTA SYSTEM TO INCREASED GENDER EQUALITY IN EU AND REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA 71

Biljana Chavkoska

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Olaf Wientzek
is Director of the MultinationalDevelopment Policy Dialogue Brussels of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and author of the EPP Party Barometer.

Полемика
УДК: 329ЕНП:329.055.2/.3(4)
329ЕНП:341.171(4-672ЕУ)

Olaf Wientzek

SHAPING EUROPE PRAGMATICALLY
IN SEARCH OF MAJORITIES

THE POSITIONING AND FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN PEOPLE'S PARTY IN A CHANGING PARTY SYSTEM

POLITICAL THOUGHT

67

The European People's Party (EPP) has played a key role in shaping European politics over the past decades. Recently, however, it has repeatedly found itself in a difficult position, caught between left-wing and liberal forces on the one hand and right-wing parties becoming stronger on the other. Which partners can and should the EPP join forces with to implement its ideas for shaping the EU's future? And where will its place be in the European party landscape of the future?

THE EPP AS A DRIVER OF THE EUROPEAN UNIFICATION PROCESS

Since its foundation in 1976, the European People's Party has been one of the two major European political families and a central player in the European integration process. No other party family has so many different national parties (83, of which 49 are in the EU). It has taken at least second place in all elections to the European Parliament and has been the largest group in the European Parliament without interruption since 1999. Many heads of state and government in the European Council have come from its ranks and continue to do so (more than half at particularly successful times). In total, it has provided eight presidents of the European Parliament, six leaders of the European Commission and two of the presidents of the European Council to date. Several heads of government from the EPP family, such as Helmut Kohl, Wilfried Martens and Angela Merkel, have left a lasting mark on European unification. The EPP has always seen itself as a driving force and pillar of the European unification process.

The EPP's most important competitor has traditionally been the Party of European Socialists (PES): at their peak, the two major political families together provided up to two thirds of the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), and together with the Liberal group, around three quarters of the seats. The major European political groups have dominated the European Council to a similar extent, too. The party landscape has since seen gradual change: firstly through the rise of the (European) Greens, who won more than ten per cent of the seats in the European Parliament for the first time in 2019; and secondly as a result of the strengthening of right-wing populist and far-right movements at the European and national level. The days when a grand coalition of EPP and Social Democrats – usually more or less supported by the Liberals – sufficed in

Brussels are long gone (see figure 1). In the European Parliament, only 45 per cent of MEPs currently come from the two major political groups. Taking current national polls as a basis, the EPP would win 23.75 per cent of the seats in the European Parliament elections (assuming 720 seats in the future), and the Social Democrats approximately 20 per cent (see figure 2).

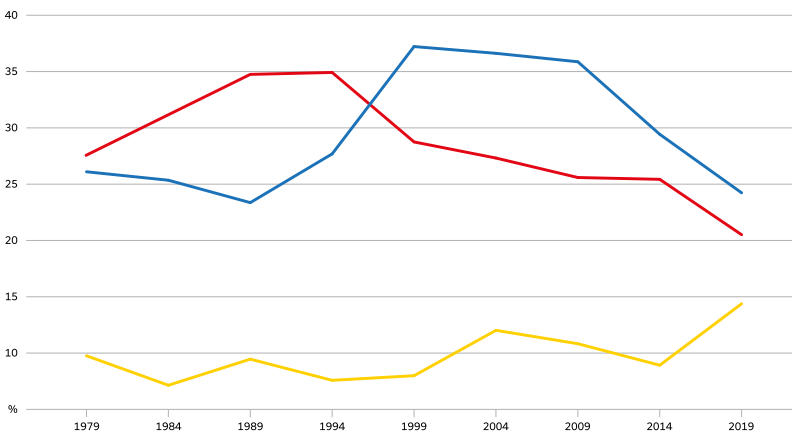
The situation in the European Council has also changed. As of 13 December 2023, of the 27 heads of state and government in the European Council, 10 were affiliated with EPP partner parties and only 5 (6 if you include Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico whose party is currently suspended from the PES) from the Social Democrats and Socialists. Three members of the European Council were politically to the right of the EPP.

Thanks to its central position in the past decades, key integration projects also bear the EPP's signature, including the single market, monetary union, foreign trade policy, the Schengen area and the EU's asylum and migration policy.

FROM CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC CORE TO THE LARGEST FORCE IN EUROPE

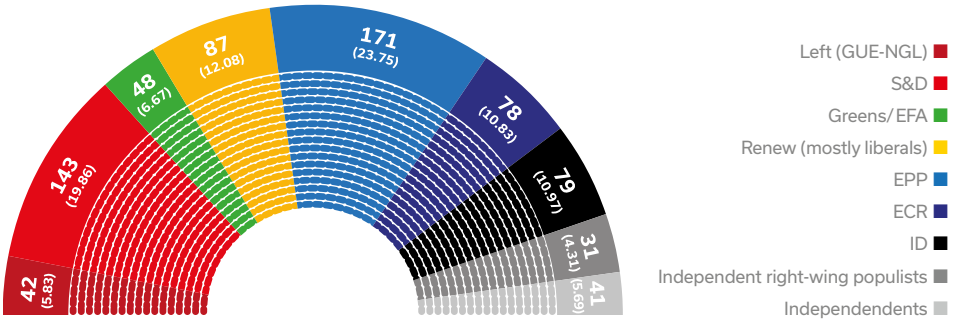
The line-up of the EPP and the EPP Group has been in a constant state of flux from the very beginning: in 1976, the EPP was founded by Christian Democratic parties from Germany, France, Italy, the Benelux countries and Ireland. Today, only a quarter of the MEPs in the Group are from these founding parties, and only two heads of state and

Fig. 1: Share of Seats Held by the Three Largest Party Families in the European Parliament following Past European Elections



Source: European Parliament, own illustration.

Fig. 2: Make-up of the European Parliament Forecast on the Basis of Current Predominantly National Polls (as of 23 Nov 2023, Share of Seats in Per Cent Shown in Brackets)



Source: own illustration based on the EPP Party Barometer November 2023, in: Wientzek, Olaf 2023: EPP Party Barometer November 2023, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 23 Nov 2023, p. 14 [5 Dec 2023].

Fig. 3: Parliamentary Groups in the European Parliament and Selected National Member Parties

Faction		Selected national member parties
ID	Identity and Democracy	Lega (Italy), Rassemblement National (France), AfD (Germany), FPÖ (Austria)
EKR	European Conservatives and Reformists	PiS (Poland), Fratelli d'Italia (Italy), Vox (Spain), ODS (Czechia), Sweden Democrats (Sweden)
EVP	European People's Party (Christian Democrats)	CDU (Germany), Partido Popular (Spain), PO (Poland), Néa Dimoratía (Greece), ÖVP (Austria)
Renew	Renew Europe	Ciudadanos (Spain), Mouvement démocrate (France), Renaissance (France), FDP (Germany)
Grüne/EFA	The Greens/ European Free Alliance	Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (Germany), Europe Écologie – Les Verts (France), GroenLinks (Netherlands)
S&D	Socialists & Democrats	PSOE (Spain), SPD (Germany), Partito Democratico (Italy), Parti Socialiste (France), SPÖ (Austria)
GUE-NGL	European United Left & Nordic Green Left	Die Linke (Germany), La France insoumise (France), Syriza (Greece)

Source: own compilation.

government in the European Council. The question quickly arose as to the possible admission of conservative and liberal parties, such as those in Spain or France. This was given the green light – supported among others by the then CDU leader Helmut Kohl.

One aspect of central importance was the proactive strategy pursued in the 1990s towards new parties from EU candidate countries from Central Eastern and South Eastern Europa that emerged in the course of the democratic transformation process.

The strategy orchestrated by the then Secretary General of the EPP, Klaus Welle, and EPP President Wilfried Martens, in consultation with the national member parties, was successful in several respects. For example, it was pivotal in the EPP permanently replacing the PES as the largest force in the European Parliament in 1999 – something that still has an impact to this day: the EPP owed its electoral victory in 2019 primarily to its above-average performance in Central Eastern and South Eastern Europe. This strategy has also impacted positively on the European integration process: the anchoring of numerous parties from the accession countries in one of the large pro-European political families has facilitated the acceptance of the European integration process in those countries. At the initiative of the then Secretary General, the EPP formulated a list of criteria for admission to the political family in the mid-1990s in the course of this enlargement process:

1. a result of at least ten per cent in the last general election or at least five per cent in the last two general elections;
2. no split in the past two years;
3. membership of the EPP Group in the European Parliament or with the respective EPP Groups in parliamentary assemblies (such as the Council of Europe);
4. commitment of the party to the European integration process (on the basis of a federal model). The party programme must reflect the guiding notion of personalism (i. e. both freedom and responsibility) and acknowledge the principle of subsidiarity.

The latter programmatic criterion in particular marks a clear distinction from Eurosceptic forces, but it is also a feature that distinguishes the EPP from the other political groups. In connection with the current discussions on how to deal with the parties to the right of the European People's Party, EPP President Manfred Weber specified three criteria for "cooperation" in 2023: pro Europe, pro Ukraine and pro rule of law– here explicitly distinguishing the EPP from the German AfD, the French Rassemblement National and the Polish PiS. Two other aspects were later mentioned by representatives of the EPP leadership: there should be no cooperation with new

parties if such cooperation is opposed by current members of the EPP political family, and programmatic proximity should be ensured.

In the course of the very broad expansion of the EPP, discussions have also arisen regarding its absorption capacity – in terms of both ideas and organisation: an ideas paper prepared by a member of an EPP working group in 2010 expressed concern at the impact of admitting new parties too quickly, not least in terms of the coherence and image of the EPP political family, and proposed a number of measures for a more precise screening and stronger support ("godparenthood") for new parties by established EPP partner parties.

HOW SHOULD PARTIES TO THE RIGHT OF THE EPP BE DEALT WITH? A LOOK BACK AT THE PAST

For more than 20 years, member parties of the EPP have increasingly had to address the question of how to position themselves vis-à-vis right-wing conservative, right-wing populist and extreme right-wing parties at the national level. In doing so, they have adopted very varied strategies, including a rightward shift in narrative and policy, minority coalitions tolerated by far-right parties, and participation in government. In many countries, however, the opposite approach still prevails: a policy of strict non-cooperation. Some of the strategies chosen have given rise to controversy: in 2000, the coalition between Austria's conservative ÖVP and the far-right FPÖ led to a serious crisis not just in the EU but also within the EPP. There are now hardly any countries in which there is no significant party to the right of the EPP, and cooperation can be observed in several countries. For a long time, the rule seemed to be that a pro-European centre-right government and a pro-European centre-left government would alternate in the EU member states, guaranteeing a certain degree of predictability but also a reliable and steady support for the European integration process, but this now no longer holds true either.

Forces to the right of the EPP are likely to grow stronger in the European elections in June.

In the European Parliament, too, there have been parties to the right of the EPP ever since the first elections to the parliament in 1979. Initially, these were rather Eurosceptic conservatives. Since 1984, however, anti-European and far-right forces

(including the Front National) have sat in the parliament, too. For a long time, the number of MEPs to the right of the EPP was fairly modest. Later, divergences and animosities between these parties often prevented the formation of a strong parliamentary group to the right of the EPP. Due to the strong position of the "grand coalition" in the European Parliament, the EPP usually did not need votes from parties to its right to find a majority at the European level.

Remarkably, over the past almost five decades, the EPP repeatedly succeeded in winning over – either temporarily or permanently – parties that had joined more conservative and Eurosceptic party alliances (formerly Union for Europe, later Union for Europe of the Nations, now the European Conservatives and Reformists Group – ECR): at the end of the 1990s, Forza Italia and the Gaullist RPR (the party of Jacques Chirac) switched from the Union for Europe to the EPP Group, as did the small Portuguese Christian conservative party CDS-PP. As a result of the former in particular, the EPP secured a strong position in France and Italy and promoted the increasingly moderate stance being adopted by these parties on European policy as a result of the responsibility they had assumed in government. From then on, Forza Italia, which was successfully integrated into the EPP group by EPP Group Chairman Hans-Gert Pöttering, became a very reliable member in terms of its voting behaviour for a long time.

A more recent example is the Slovak conservative party OL'aNO, which originally joined the ECR Group in the European Parliament in 2014 before switching to the EPP Group in 2019. One only intermittently successful partnership was between the EPP and the European Democrats (ED), which included the British Conservatives and the liberal-conservative Czech ODS from 1999 to 2009.

CHANGED OVERALL SITUATION IN BRUSSELS AND STRASBOURG

Given some of the developments of the past four years, the discussion about how the EPP should deal with parties to its right is taking place in a different context in several respects: in 2019, the very close election of Commission President Ursula von der Leyen probably also succeeded with votes from the ECR Group, and in 2021, after numerous controversies and suspension of membership, Hungary's Fidesz left the EPP.

Looking ahead to the forthcoming European elections, there are signs that forces to the right of the EPP are likely to grow stronger: if current polls are anything to go by, there may be a pool of some 180 to 190 MEPs in the next European Parliament who belong

to parties to the right of the EPP. Together, therefore, they would possibly be stronger than the EPP (which – before the possible inclusion of as yet unaffiliated parties – would be at around 170 to 175, according to current opinion polls). Both the far-right group Identity and Democracy (ID) and the ECR Group would hold more than ten per cent of the seats. The Greens and likely also the Liberals could lose seats. Renew is even in danger of losing the third place either to the ECR or the ID. There is much to suggest that it would take the united support of at least three major political groups to gain a stable majority in the European Parliament.

Parallel to this, programmatic differences between the EPP and the three other pro-European political groups have increased recently: in 2023, for example, the EPP has been unsuccessful in votes on individual projects in connection with the European Green Deal – such as the Nature restoration law in July 2023 – by a narrow margin against a broad alliance of the Left, Greens and the liberal group in particular. Even if, as things stand, the EPP has a good chance of becoming the strongest force once again, recent experience raises questions in terms of the constellations needed for it to be able to implement its ideas in terms of both personnel and programme. Accordingly, there has recently been repeated speculation about "cooperation" between the EPP and the ECR (or some of the parties belonging to the ECR) – modelled on the governing coalition in Czechia, which is formed almost exclusively of EPP and ECR parties.

ANYTHING BUT HOMOGENEOUS: THE PARTIES TO THE RIGHT OF THE EPP

The parties to the right of the EPP are a very diverse group, currently largely divided into two political groups at the EP: the Eurosceptic, more nationally conservative ECR (which also includes a number of right-wing populist parties, however) and the clearly far-right populist ID. There are also some parties (including Hungary's Fidesz) that are independent of any parliamentary group. The range of parties represented here is enormous, so they cannot be perceived as a coherent group: the ECR includes the ODS, which leads a coalition with EPP parties in Czechia and whose current orientation is largely compatible with the EPP. Liberal-conservative MEPs from the Flemish nationalist N-VA are also to be found here. The EPP was in a parliamentary group with the ODS for ten years (at the time of the EPP-ED parliamentary group mentioned above).

However, the majority of the MEPs in the ECR belong to parties with which the overlaps in European policy are significantly smaller and which in particular do not meet one (and in some cases either) of the first two of the three criteria put forward by Manfred Weber – pro EU, pro rule of law, pro-Ukraine – such as the right-wing populist Vox, the

Polish national conservative PiS, the Sweden Democrats, the Finns Party and the Dutch JA21. With its pragmatic course on European policy under the current leader, the ODS is an exception rather than the rule, even within its own parliamentary group. The ECR also includes Fratelli d'Italia, the party of the Italian head of government, Giorgia Meloni.

The formation of a large parliamentary group to the right of the EPP seems illusory for the time being.

The ID is dominated by right-wing populist and right-wing extremist parties (including the AfD, the Rassemblement National, Lega, the FPÖ and the Czech SPD): here, programmatic reasons alone are enough for the EPP to rule out cooperation. In the past, there have been efforts – as yet unsuccessful – to form a joint far-right faction of parties from the ECR and the ID. Overlaps in programme between the two existing parliamentary groups are to be found in their Eurosceptic orientation (of differing degrees), harsh criticism of the European Commission, and also in terms of their votes and positions on migration and asylum policy; otherwise, however, the parties of the two parliamentary groups have little in common. What might be the last major attempt to initiate such cooperation dates back to 2 July 2021, when 16 parties from the two groups – including the PiS, the Rassemblement National, Lega, Fidesz, the FPÖ but also Meloni'sFratelli d'Italia – voiced massive criticism of EU policy. All in all, that statement reflected a European policy stance that is incompatible with the EPP.

One noteworthy point here is that the AfD was not involved in that initiative. Not least the enormous differences between the ECR (pro-Ukraine) and the parties in the ID (pro-Russian orientation) in connection with the war in Ukraine make close cooperation and the formation of a large parliamentary group to the right of the EPP seem illusory for the time being. However, the 2021 initiative and also earlier initiatives highlight the fact that the majority of these parties have limited compatibility with the EPP in terms of their position on Europe.

PARTNERS IN THE POLITICAL CENTRE

When considering the potential for cooperation and also the potential for expansion to include new parties, the first place to look is at forces that are still unaffiliated and are not in the right-wing populist camp. Close partners could include new political forces in the

Netherlands with roots in their country's EPP partner party (CDA), for example the new NSC party.

The liberal Renew parliamentary group also includes some parties that have significant ideological overlaps with the EPP and do not belong to the (left) liberal core of the political family – the Portuguese PSD and the Romanian PNL are among those that have switched to the EPP in the past. What is more, it is not known what will become of Emmanuel Macron's party – Renaissance – which has absorbed numerous figures from the centre-right spectrum in recent years and is the largest group within Renew. So in terms of its long-term strategic orientation – as in the 1990s – the EPP should turn its gaze not only in the direction of conservative parties but also to centrist and liberal parties. It should also be noted that the EPP Group traditionally has the greatest voting overlap with the Liberals on most issues in the European Parliament – to a greater extent than with the ECR.

The EPP is inherently committed to the European unification process as well as to democracy, freedom and the rule of law.

WHAT STRATEGY SHOULD THE EPP ADOPT?

When talking about cooperation between the EPP and other parties or parliamentary groups, a distinction can be drawn between three forms of political cooperation:

1. The lowest threshold is collaboration between the EPP and another group in the European Parliament – be it of a structural nature in the form of a coalition or on an ad hoc basis on specific issues.
2. A higher-threshold form of cooperation would be to actually join the EPP Group: parties that are still unaffiliated often join a parliamentary group after the elections and before parliamentary groups are formed (though without becoming a member of the party). Transfers from other political families are also quite common, however. It is possible both to join and leave a parliamentary group without having to go through a lengthy procedure. However, the admission of a larger group to the parliamentary faction in particular has a significant impact on the balance of power in the group and on its programmatic orientation and strategy. A party that could bring 20+ members of parliament (such as Fratelli d'Italia, if current polls are

anything to go by) would put forward a claim to be proactively involved in decision-making and the exercise of power.

3. The closest possible form of cooperation is the admission of a party to the EPP party family. This would presuppose ideological coherence and requires basic trust in the party's programmatic compatibility, reliability and also structural sustainability. The admission of a party as a full member gives it access to party bodies with voting rights and hence the opportunity to leave a lasting mark on the political family. The EPP thus requires candidates to undergo a process consisting of several stages here. Moreover, past experience has shown that ousting parties is a lengthy process with fairly high hurdles, which – as in the case of Fidesz – can cause considerable upheavals within the EPP political family itself.

The EPP should not allow itself to be beguiled by simplistic slogans that invoke the cohesion of pro-European forces at all costs.

Before looking at coalition options and a possible opening to the right – the size of a political family is not an end in itself – the question for the EPP is what vision it has for the EU and what priorities it wishes to set in the coming legislative period and beyond. If we look at the DNA of the EPP, as well as that of the overwhelming majority of its member parties, the prevailing idea is a clear commitment to the European unification process and its main achievements, as well as to democracy, freedom and the rule of law. Any departure from these core values would not be supported by a majority of its members. The guiding principles of the EPP also traditionally include a clear commitment to the transatlantic partnership and to the social market economy, based on responsibility, solidarity, solidity and subsidiarity.

In view of the challenges facing the EU, obvious points to address would be the strengthening of competitiveness, a comprehensive concept of sustainability that includes not only the environmental aspects but also the financial, economic and social dimensions, support for Ukraine, a pragmatic asylum and migration policy, and advocacy for a free democratic world order. A paper by the EPP-affiliated Martens Centre identifies "seven Ds" here as both challenges and priorities for action: defence, debt, digitalisation, demography, democracy, de-carbonisation and de-risking globalisation.

The next step would be for the EPP to consider which constellations would enable its priorities to be implemented most effectively. If the EPP remained true to the guiding

principles it has followed to date and set the above-mentioned priorities, there would still be large areas of overlap with the political groups of the other pro-European forces – above all the Liberals. At the same time, the EPP should not already bind itself unconditionally to a left-liberal alliance of Socialists, Liberals and Greens in every policy area – not least because it otherwise risks the forces to its right filling the ensuing gaps, e. g. in the areas of migration, environmental and energy policy. In this connection, too, the EPP should not allow itself to be beguiled by simplistic slogans that invoke the cohesion of pro-European forces at all costs. The EPP was given an impressive demonstration of just how much such sometimes pompous appeals are worth in 2019 when Liberals and Socialists quickly abandoned the Spitzenkandidat principle, thereby destroying the chances of the EPP's Spitzenkandidat Manfred Weber of being elected to the office of Commission President.

At the same time, there are currently limits to the desire for alternative alliances: the ODS – which is currently certainly compatible with the EPP and has indeed signalled an interest in closer cooperation – does not represent the majority view of the present ECR parliamentary group in its current orientation. At the same time, it is in the interests of the EPP not to cut off any possibility of pragmatic collaboration with constructive forces in the ECR. This applies to issues of personnel policy as well: the European Council plays an essential role in determining the President of the Commission, and the heads of state and government of two countries are from the ECR Group. How promising any ad hoc cooperation with the ECR might be depends not least on the dynamics within the ECR parliamentary group: Fratelli d'Italia could overtake the Polish PiS and become the largest member in the 2024 European Parliament elections. Should the Fratelli d'Italia maintain the comparatively pragmatic course that Meloni has adopted since assuming government responsibility in the European Parliament as well, the ECR could possibly become a more constructive partner.

A formal permanent coalition with the ECR and without the Socialists is hardly realistic as it will likely not have the necessary numbers. The Liberals, the EPP and the ECR would currently gain 330 to 340 seats (see figure 2), but in view of the lack of compulsory unanimity within a parliamentary group in the European Parliament, a viable coalition actually really needs 390 to 400 seats. Furthermore, leading Liberals have already clearly distanced themselves from the possibility of such a "centre-right" alliance. It should also be borne in mind that given the EPP's own internal diversity, a lasting and more vehement left-right confrontation in the European Parliament could be a stress test for the EPP, too.

With regard to the second form of cooperation – the admission of new parties to the EPP Group – it is crucial to bear in mind that the inclusion of larger parties in particular

changes the ideological orientation and the balance of power within the faction. In the hypothetical case of Fratelli d'Italia, or an alliance under its leadership, being admitted, much would depend on the line-up of this new delegation – whether it was made up of pragmatic forces or in fact of far-right actors. The inclusion of a controversial party in the parliamentary group could also lead to alienation and an exodus of long-serving members. The founding Christian Democratic EPP parties from the Benelux countries, for example, have repeatedly warned against admitting Eurosceptic forces, and they called for the exclusion of Fidesz early on; they are also among the forces critical of admitting Fratelli. Other forces considered this step to be at least premature at the present time. Although together they have fewer MEPs than Fidesz, they have demonstrated above-average participation in the EPP for decades, and the Dutch in particular are close to the German Christian Democrats. Admission of the Flemish nationalist N-VA to the EPP Group could meet with similar resistance – not least from parties that are confronted with separatist parties in their own countries.

It is important to identify potential partners early and to maintain communication channels.

On the other hand, the admission of new parties to the parliamentary faction (without simultaneous admission to the political family) could enable forces to prove themselves in the European Parliament and in the day-to-day work, thereby strengthening mutual understanding. What is more, it is important not to underestimate the socialising power of the parliamentary group itself. This is especially true of new forces that are still unaffiliated. The admission of a party such as Fratelli d'Italia – which was still supporting European policy positions incompatible with the EPP in 2021 (see above) – can only succeed if its European policy orientation has changed credibly and sustainably since then. The triad of "pro EU, pro Ukraine, pro rule of law" is a necessary precondition for cooperation based on trust, but for an entire legislative period it is not sufficient on its own. Ultimately, the influence of a political group in the European Parliament is measured not only by its size, but also by its unity. For this reason, an important criterion for new admissions should be that a high degree of loyalty can be expected. The admission of Fratelli d'Italia is not currently on the agenda anyway.

The closest possible form of cooperation – admission to the European People's Party – should be weighed up particularly carefully. Not only arithmetic should be considered here but also ideological compatibility and therefore the political family's absorption capacity. The EPP's broad line-up provides flexibility, but its parties are held together

by a fundamentally pro-European and pro-integration consensus: questioning this would probably plunge the political family into a crisis. The criteria for joining the EPP formulated in the 1990s – updated with a view to current challenges (pro Ukraine and pro rule of law) and with a clear focus on programmatic compatibility – ought to provide a solid basis for future admissions practice. Serious consideration should also be given to the idea of "godparenthood" for newly admitted parties, as was suggested in 2010.

At the same time, as in the 1990s – while continuing to remain cautious with regard to admitting potential (large) new members – it is important to plan ahead, identify potential future partners at an early stage and maintain channels of communication.

For a political family that sees itself as a "people's party" and aspires to shape the future accordingly, it is not a satisfactory state of affairs in the long run to be below ten per cent in France and Italy, i. e. two of the largest EU countries. The EPP should therefore closely follow developments in the centre and centre-right spectrum in these two countries, provide support and encourage a possible change in Italy towards a constructive European policy orientation, for example – not least in order to prevent new attempts to form a major force to the right of the EPP in the long term. If they establish themselves in the Italian party system as the most important force within the conservative spectrum, Fratelli d'Italia (or a successor party) could otherwise become a key centre of power for such an alliance to the right of the EPP. It would also serve the European integration process if, in the long term, a situation were to arise in France and Italy in which more than one pro-European force existed in the broader political centre with a realistic prospect of leading a government.

Due to its internal diversity and its history marked by several waves of enlargement, the EPP already performs an important bridging function between various political forces – more so than other European political families. As it has already done several times in its 47-year history, it will face the important challenge in the coming years of positioning itself with a clear vision regarding key issues that confront the EU based on its core values, while at the same time responding to developments in the party systems of its member states and attracting new forces in the medium term.

The EPP will remain a central pillar of the European unification process after the 2024 elections. Its positioning in the European party system and its strategy vis-à-vis the parties to its right will have consequences not only for itself but also for the further advancement of the European unification project.

– translated from German –

First printed in KAS International Reports Issue 4/2023, Volume 39 p.18-29

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Timco Mucunski

is an Assistant Professor of Law at the Faculty of Law "Iustinianus Primus", University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius. He also currently serves as the Mayor of the Municipality of Aerodrom as well as Vice-President of the political party VMRO-DPMNE. Timco is also a former scholar of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

Изворна научна статија
УДК: 341.232(73:4)(091)
327(73:4-672ЕУ)

Timco Mucunski

THE INFLUENCE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE CREATION OF THE NEW EUROPEAN POLITICAL ARCHITECTURE

POLITICAL THOUGHT
67

INTRODUCTION: THE INFLUENCE OF THE UNITED STATES ON EUROPE IN THE POST-WORLD WAR II PERIOD

The military actions during the Second World War, which mostly took place on European soil, caused serious and irreparable humanitarian, economic and infrastructural consequences. The fast, efficient and effective overcoming of the economic problems was openly supported by the United States, which thanks to the strong economic development had enough capacity and opportunity to meet the large number of needs and demands of the affected European states. The post-war victorious atmosphere quickly turned into a strong disappointment, because the next step of almost all national governments was directed towards finding the most suitable ways to get out of the situation of chronic food shortages, lack of homes to live in, destroyed cities, roads and basic infrastructure as soon as possible. At the same time, it was inevitable to carry out a restructuring from a military to a peacetime economy, to overcome the lack of hospital facilities, high unemployment, outbreak of infectious diseases, problems related to children's education and lack of facilities for teaching. For the solution of the majority of the mentioned problems, only sincere domestic wishes and efforts to achieve prosperity were not enough, but the strong need for additional help outside the European borders also appeared.

Taking into account the fact that the continental part of the United States of America was not immediately involved in military actions and destruction, even before the end of the war in the United States of America there was a strong growth of production activities, which gave enough hope to the Europeans that the greatest solidarity support could arrive. right from the ally across the Atlantic. The first serious signs of readiness to provide comprehensive assistance by the American administration were given even before the end of the war and through the large number of formal and informal agreements during the holding of several important international conferences (Tehran, London, Moscow, etc.). Although the Second World War severely destroyed Europe and most of the countries were totally economically exhausted, as a result of the growth of world trade, changes in government policies, scientific and technological progress and foreign aid, Europe slowly but surely began to experience its incredible economic revival.

After the end of the war, many European countries realized that customs and taxes within the framework of inter-European trade had a negative impact and immediately began to gradually eliminate them. At the same time, cooperation with primary producers from Africa and Asia was rapidly increasing, which leads to a partial increase

in the prices of their raw materials, but also to an increased demand for the purchase of products from Europe. The scientific and technological progress after the war was a significant factor for the reconstruction of the European economy, which was especially evident in the development of the chemical and electronic industry. The demand for electrical household appliances in some way ensured continued prosperity in the post-war years. The change of government policies in the area of social and health care (Great Britain), the introduction of new transport systems (France), the modernization of the machine park in basic industries (German) and the overall encouragement of private investments created opportunities for an increased number of employments. and assumptions for permanent and long-term economic growth in Europe. However, one of the most important factors in the economic recovery was based on foreign aid to the European economy, in which the United States of America played the main role.

At the end of 1943, the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was established, which was made up of 44 member states, where the funding came from, of course with the largest participation of the United States. Such an international agency provided the most necessary first aid to all countries that were affected by fascist regimes. In addition to the current aid to the countries affected by the war, help was also given in the reconstruction of their communication systems, and the most affected branches, such as agriculture and industry. Until 1948, more than 22 million tons of food, clothing, medical aid, etc. were distributed through the said agency, and the biggest benefits at that time were received by Yugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Italy and Austria, without whose realization the Eastern European countries probably we would survive even greater material damages and loss of human lives. In the context of providing financial aid, part of the Western countries, including the United States of America, as early as 1944 at a conference in Bretton Woods in New Hampshire, agreed to establish the International Bank for Reconstruction (World Bank) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The intention of the bank was to lend money to countries affected by the war, which are in the process of reconstruction, as well as to help the further development of underdeveloped countries. The IMF, in turn, enabled the use of short-term loans by countries that had problems with temporary insufficiently balanced payments.

The United States of America had a strong influence on the development of democratic processes in adopted Europe. When West Germany wrote its own constitution in 1948, it drew its basic inspiration from the US constitution.[1] Even more indisputable was the strong influence of the United States of America on European countries in the segment

1 Shuck, P.H. and Wilson, J.Q. eds., 2008 Editors. *Understanding America.* Public Affairs. New York. Pg.604

of foreign policy, security and defense. One of the most notable political figures in Europe was the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill. He often spoke about the European tragedy throughout history, therefore not forgetting to highlight his vision for creating a European family, which will create a structure in which peace, stability, security, democracy and freedom could survive in the long term.

The model for the structure that Churchill had in his mind was ready and possible for everyone to see : "The Great Republic across the Atlantic Ocean". He stressed that Europe had to become more like the United States. If Americans from places as far-flung and diverse as Texas and Massachusetts, Alabama and Oregon, could feel a shared commonality of citizenship within their national frameworks, then surely Europeans could form their own " national grouping. " Why couldn't that be ", he adds that " a European group which towards the disturbed people off that turbulent and impressive continent could bring a sense of shared patriotism and common citizenship ? And why should it not take its rightful place with other groupings in the modeling of people's destiny ? "[2]. Churchill told his fellow Europeans that the path to a future of peace and prominence on the world stage was clear : " We must build a kind of United States of Europe ".[3] Such a strong idea derived from one of the most prominent political leaders of the 20th century undoubtedly had a great influence on the development of the idea among political leaders and statesmen in other European countries, such as Robert Schumann (France), Konrad Adenauer (Germany), etc.

Before the joint meeting between the governments of France, Great Britain and the United States (May 10, 1950) and in the context of resolving the issue of German steel, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Robert Schumann, turned to his friend Jean Monnet for help. It was the French businessman Monnet who was the conceptual creator of the High Joint Authority (High Commission) of France and Germany for control over coal and steel production, and within the practical development of the project he later became its leader. Jean Monnet's plan in addition to solving the then current one problem with German steel production was also the basis for further deepened economic and governmental cooperation and the creation of the Coal and Steel Community and later the EU. The press conference of the French Minister Schuman on May 9, 1950, at which the French government presented the proposal for the control of coal and steel production, is the basis of the famous "Schuman Declaration", which for many in Europe is the same as the Declaration of Independence

2 Reid, T.R., 2004. *The United States of Europe, The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy*. The Penguin Press. New York. Pg.35.

3 Ibid., Pg.36

of United States of America, simultaneously marking the beginning of a new democratic era of cooperation, gradual unification and unification of European values.

"The Idea of Europe" spread widely across the Atlantic and found strong support from the United States as well - partly for the same pacifist, ideological reasons that made that project attractive to Europeans and partly because it is beyond pure realpolitik : for Washington, a unified Western Europe could be a strong ally in the fight against the Soviets and their Eastern bloc.[4]

The United States of America was the main initiator of the establishment of the most powerful military organization in the 20th century - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization - NATO, as one of the key factors that enabled the further unification of Europe. The new political security structure of this organization was formed in order to take responsibility for maintaining peace and security in Europe, to encourage the development of democracy and the development of the market economy, and to establish closer cooperation between partners on both sides of the Atlantic. The main role of NATO was to serve as a mechanism of deterring the communist bloc of states from Eastern Europe (led by the USSR) from their possible military security threats and to free the almost disunited Europe from the further pressure of new conflicts, misunderstandings and wars.

The view from today's perspective of the events of the middle of the 20th century is much clearer and without the need for an in-depth historical and political analysis, one could freely conclude that NATO played its real role in preserving peace and security in Europe, in balancing on the relations between the West and the East during the Cold War, in the expansion and enlargement of the EU towards the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and in the increase of European unity and togetherness.

THE MARSHALL PLAN, THE BEGINNING OF A NEW EUROPEAN CHAPTER

During the Second World War, most of the political leaders of the Western European countries, members of the Anti-Hitler coalition, did not want to neglect the destructive influence of their own national interest, and they observed the promotion of common political and economic cooperation more as a way to avoid possible future conflicts around the new spheres of political and economic interest. Such a vision seems to have

4 Ibid., Pg45

acquired a different course and substance after the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, when US Secretary of State George Marshall proposed to make a plan to finance the reconstruction of Europe through an appropriate economic aid program. The idea of J. Marshall was to provide financial aid to European countries, which had to agree to rebuild their economies on a cooperative basis, that is, to join the economic reconstruction program. This presupposed the construction and acceptance of a common system of tariffs, harmonization of industrial and agricultural production and other activities in order not to waste time and effort in creating unnecessary competition among themselves, which would simultaneously contribute to the common economic recovery happening more quickly..

American General George Marshall's plan was to transfer 1 percent of American GDP to Europe, in order to encourage their post-war reconstruction, and he pleasantly surprised them[5]. The US Congress gave away US taxpayers' money to Europe's problems, and European finance ministers rushed to take advantage of that donation. But for the Kremlin, the American plan represented a pure economic and political threat to Soviet control over their newly conquered satellites. The angry president of the Soviet Union, J. C. _ Stalin criticized the plan as " American interference in the internal affairs of other countries " and insisted that the Czechs withdraw their request for American economic aid.[6] The publicly declared policy of US President Harry S. Truman (quite different from his predecessor Roosevelt who did not oppose the Soviet expansion and pro-communist policy), accompanied by the deep ideological, political and economic differences between the Western European democratic countries led by the United States of America and the communist ones led by the Soviet Union was an immediate introduction to the long-lasting Cold War., which often threatened world peace and security. In addition to the deep ideological, political, and economic differences between the United States and the Soviet Union, there were also strong substantive differences within the socio-political systems, as well as in the formation of their parliamentary and governmental structures. In the United States of America, parliamentary and government structures are formed through free and democratic elections, through the existence of competing political parties, the existence of different political opinions, including the right to free choice, speech, free media, etc. Contrary to the positive example of the United States of America, in the Soviet Union the then parliamentary and government structures are formed by the Communist Party, without the right to exist of other competitive political parties, without the right to free assembly, speech and free and independent journalism.

5 Hughes, J.W., 2006. *The Cold War*. Constable & Robinson Ltd. London. Pg.71
6 Ibid., 72

The promotion of free trade worldwide by the United States provoked a strong reaction from the Soviet Union, which wanted to protect itself from international trade, fearing that trade with the West could expose Russia to Western influences, thus undermining the strength of the Soviet Union. their totalitarian regime, which in principle is the root of the strong economic opposition that existed for a long time between the two blocs. After the promotion of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan in 1947, the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union intensified. The beginning of it was already evident during the intensive activities for the liberation of the occupied Eastern European countries and the open Russian intentions to form communist governments throughout Eastern Europe, with minimal influence of their opponents or possible coalition partners. Stalin was not satisfied with limiting his influence only on Eastern European countries, but at the same time he invested efforts in helping and strengthening the communist parties in Western European countries such as Italy and France, where in the mentioned period the communist parties experienced a kind of flourishing. In addition to Truman's disbelief in the communist regime of the Soviet Union, the fact of the United States of America's possession and successful tests of the atomic bomb served as a particularly strong incentive for the formation of blocs and the obstruction of Russia from promoting expansionist policy towards European countries. Added to that is the non-cooperative approach of Russia at the Potsdam Conference, insisting on the payment of strong reparations by Germany, and last but not least, the non-acceptance of the American proposal for internationalization and opening of the main waterways.

With the implementation of the Marshall aid came the economic division of Europe and, most importantly, of East Germany from West Germany. [7]The bad relations between the West and the East and the beginning of the Cold War are hinted at in a speech by the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill held in March 1946, in Fulton, Missouri (United States of America), when he says that "from Stettin on the Baltic to Trieste on the Adriatic, an iron curtain is descending across the entire continent.... Behind that line are all the capitals of Eastern and Central Europe and all of them in one form or another are subject not only to Soviet influence, but also to a very high and increasing control from Moscow" [8]. Such a speech further increases the existing American suspicions about the aggressive intentions of the Soviet Union aimed at structuring a new Europe. Already the following year (in March 1947), the British suspended financial and military aid to the Greek government, which was threatened with overthrow by the communist guerrillas. At the same time, the communist

7 Dobson, A.P., Marsh, S., 2001. *US Foreign Policy since 1945*. Routledge. London. Pg.22

8 Zürcher, E.J., 1993, *Turkey - A Modern History*. I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd. London- New York.

supporters orchestrated by Russia created similar problems in Turkey as well, so that the United States had more and more doubts related to the need to quickly neutralize Russian power in that part of Europe. Immediately after the war, when France was temporarily outside the power of some equality, China still in severe pains with its own civil war, Britain weakened by its war efforts, in fact the key reflections were directed to the Soviet and American power and the danger of a re-growth of German power.. After the Soviets and the Americans began to fear the realization of mutual threats and potential harm that they could inflict on each other, neither side could afford Germany to fully join the other's camp. The potential power that one could acquire would be unacceptable for the other. That was the reason why the German problem was such a sensitive issue and why the division became semi - permanent. But mutual suspicion and security fear spread deeper than that. The Soviets did not have an atomic bomb, unlike the Americans who did, and this caused uncertainty. They were afraid of the economic power of the United States and the danger of the spread of capitalism.[9]

The response of the United States of America was precisely in the promotion of Truman's anti-communist doctrine, accompanied by massive military economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey. The United States of America realized that a prosperous Europe would be the most effective barrier to communism, and in the context of realizing the set goal, the very idea of supporting and promoting the Marshall Plan for economic reconstruction is the same. The Soviet Union firmly refuses financial aid, with the rationale that behind it are the expansionist plans of the United States, which wants to establish a world in which the supremacy of American imperialism will rule and be established. In fact, the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan marked the leading of the Western countries towards a strong resistance in relation to the expansionist activities of the Russian communists, which from a formal aspect can be treated as the beginning of the Cold War. In the speech of June 5, 1947, the US Secretary of State J. Marshall emphasizes that "European demands are much greater than its current possibilities to pay them and therefore it needs additional help in order to face the economic, social and political declines which are of a very serious nature". He then proposed a solution in which the European nations themselves, with significant help from the United States, had to prepare a program for the reconstruction of Europe. The importance of the Marshall Plan was immediately strongly and positively recognized. On June 13, 1947, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin predicted that the address of J. Marshall "will rank as one of the

9 Dobson, A.P., Marsh, S., 2001. *US Foreign Policy since 1945.* Routledge. London. Pg.20.

greatest speeches in world history"[10] The first formal discussion and joint consideration of the proposal of the US Secretary of State J. Marshall was put on the agenda by the European countries at the high-level meeting held in Paris in July 1947. The proposal was then strongly attacked by the Soviet Union, primarily because of the opening of the financial reports for each of the countries receiving the aid, which allegedly threatened the economic independence of the countries. The Soviet Union simultaneously attacks the Marshall Plan, treating it as a scheme to sell non-essential American goods to Europe and as part of an imperialist tactic to expand US commercial interests into the market of communist countries. A few days after the beginning of the conference, the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav M. Molotov left the meeting, declaring that the Soviet government rejected the plan as totally unsatisfactory. Such abandonment of the Soviets by Western leaders was interpreted as another rejection of efforts to support post-war stabilization, emphasizing that Molotov's action contributed to increasing tensions between the West and the Soviet Union. As a result of such a hard stance, the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe that were under their control, were further warned not to receive any American aid.

As an alternative to the Marshall Plan, the Soviet Union proposed Soviet subsidies in trade with Western Europe for the countries of Eastern Europe, and it was known as the Molotov Plan, and later as COMECON. The Soviet representative in the UN, in those moments of strong confrontation, even declared that the Marshall Plan violates the principles of the UN. He accused the United States of trying to impose its will on independent states through such a plan, while simultaneously using economic resources to distribute aid that nations need and which is used as an instrument of political pressure. At the same time, the United States of America was accused of making a serious attempt to divide Europe into two blocs, in order to form a bloc of several European hostage states against the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe.[11] A few days later (July 16, 1947) 16 nations from Western Europe who believed in the sincere desire of the United States to help them in their economic recovery held a meeting and formed the Committee for European Economic Cooperation, giving it the task of drafting a Reconstruction Program. for a period of 4 years. The implementation of the proposed program was initially delayed due to the opposition from the American Congress, which was undoubtedly related to the extraordinarily large amount of funds that was planned for the implementation of the planned program. Only after the events and the coup in Czechoslovakia (which was taken over by the communist pro-

10 1947. Marshall Sees Europe in Need of Vast New U.S. Aid; Urges Self-Help in Reconstruction. *Washington Post*, June 6. p. 13.

11 Schain, M.A., 2001. *The Marshall Plan: fifty years after*. Palgrave. p.132

Soviet regime) did the US Congress realize the seriousness of the situation and in April 1948 (ten months after it was formally proposed) approved the Marshall Plan, i.e. the Program for the Reconstruction of Europe.

Surrounded by members of Congress and his cabinet, on April 3, 1948, US President Harry S. Truman signed the Foreign Assistance Act, the legislation that formally established the Marshall Plan. At the same time, in his official statement, he emphasized that only a few presidents had the privilege to sign legislation of such importance, at the same time emphasizing that those measures were the American response to the challenge the free world was facing at the time. The Marshall Plan was actually a bipartisan effort proposed by a Democratic president, passed into law by the dominant Republican Congress, and in an extremely competitive election year.

In the period from 1948 to 1952, the United States of America invested more than 12 billion am in the aid for the economic reconstruction of the Western European countries. dollars, half of which amount was intended for France, Z. Germany and W. Britain. Financial aid and investments in industry and agriculture strongly stimulated economic productivity and efficiency in Europe, and the result was an increase of 25% compared to 1939, and already in 1952, 50% higher compared to 1938[12]. Such a strong economic development of Western Europe has been noted as one of the biggest economic booms in general in recent economic history. From 1950 to 1960, the annual growth rate of production of goods was about 4%. The merits of the Marshall Plan for the strong economic development of the Western European countries is unquestionable, because it was the one that acted as a stimulus from the very beginning of its implementation and strongly enabled further economic cooperation between European countries, including the realization of the age-old idea of achieving a stronger European unity and unification.

As we concluded, the most important impetus for political and especially economic cooperation came after the promotion of the Marshall Plan, and its immediate expression was the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) established in June 1948. OEEC was an intergovernmental body, and the Council as its working body was made up of representatives of all member countries. This body was empowered to determine general policy issues and all other administrative issues. The decisions were made by consensus with mandatory application for all those who accepted them, while those countries that were absent from the making of the decisions had no importance for them. The five basic functions of the OEEC were the

12 Schain, M.A., 2001. *The Marshall Plan: fifty years after*. Palgrave. p.133.

following : appropriate division of American aid among member countries, reduction of trade barriers, improvement of the payment system in European trade (they formed the European Payment Union), making technical studies on European economic growth (payment, trade, labor movement) and enabling the creation of a larger free trade zone in which member countries will benefit from more stable currencies, increased production and prosperity. Under the influence of the Marshall Plan, UNISCAN was formed, that is, the Union formed in 1950 by Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Great Britain, for the purpose of holding consultations in economic matters. Later in 1953, the Nordic Council was founded between Finland, Iceland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, which in turn agreed to harmonize their economic policies within their annual meetings.

In recent years, historians have asked more important questions in order to answer in the context of, what is to be distinguished from the Marshall Plan, and whether its motivation or its overall effectiveness is more important. Other historians try to prove that the benefit of the Marshall Plan is the new laissez - faire, which enables the stabilization of markets through economic growth.[13]

From the above, we could conclude that the Marshall Plan had a positive impact on the overall political and economic development of Europe, strengthened the friendly relations between the United States and the countries of Western Europe that used the aid, helped in their reconstruction and made a great contribution to their accelerated economic development. development and progress. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the Marshall Plan imposed a new geostrategic reality, was one of the main reasons for the increase in tensions between the West and the East, but at the same time it influenced the growth of nationalist tendencies in the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia. It also increased the political and military pressure of the Soviet Union on their satellites, marked the beginning of the Cold War, ushered in a difficult period for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (imposing communism as their only development option) and immediately fueled the later arms race.

13 Woods, T.E., 2004. T*he Politically Incorrect Guide to American History*. Regenry Publishing. p. 189-191.

THE BEGINNING OF TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE: CLOSER POLITICAL, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Although after the end of the Second World War it was expected that Europe would completely turn towards a future free from the creation of new military - political alliances and the creation of an independent, market-oriented and economically strong space, however, such a scenario did not materialize. The height of the conflict between the East and the West was the Berlin Crisis, at a time when Western European countries were still thinking about how to build their security structure, and Russia had already stopped all land traffic between Berlin and West Germany. Western countries treated that step as the first in a series of Soviet attempts to force the US to withdraw first from Germany and then from Europe. The resolution of the Western opposition went so far that the possibility of opening a new military conflict was not excluded. The Berlin crisis was the peak of the misunderstanding between East and West, although its historical background begins from the first misunderstandings between the Allied powers that appeared before and during 1945, that is, during the holding of the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences, when both parties interpret the agreed principles for the postwar treatment of Germany in different ways.

According to the Treaty of Potsdam, Germany was treated as a single economic unit and it was agreed as reparation for the great damage caused to the Russian economy during the Second World War and as compensation in a proportional amount that Russia would receive industrial products that were then produced by German industry in the West. zone, and in return, food and raw material should be delivered from the Russian-controlled Eastern Zone to the Western Zones. But since Russia wanted to exploit the raw material base of the eastern regions to the maximum, without delivering the necessary products to the western zones, the Americans reciprocally stopped delivering industrial products to the eastern zones, where in fact the source of the first serious dispute is located. The second dispute related to Potsdam arose around the agreement of the 4 occupying powers to destroy the Nazi system and open the way to the democratization of Germany. According to Western interpretations, denazification and punishment should only apply to people who took an active part in the Nazi regime, and Russia was of the opinion that the punishment should be for the entire bourgeois class, because the roots for the emergence of Nazism as an ideology were also found in bourgeois capitalism..

Later in 1947, the Marshall Plan appeared, based on the Truman Doctrine, and in 1948, the diplomatic conflict broke out when Russia, responding to the pressure, claimed that

all of Berlin should be in its zone. According to the London Agreement of June 1948, the United States, Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg declare that they will form a democratic West German government in the western zones, which according to the understanding of the Soviet Union was interpreted as a claim to create a state that will be anti-Soviet militarily. directed. The bad relations between the United States of America and the Soviet Union before 1948 produced the Berlin crisis, when in addition to restoring the German economy and creating financial stability in Germany, they made the inevitable reform of the monetary system, after which the Soviet Union on June 24, 1948 cut off communication with West Berlin and the West German zones, and the population in West Berlin was brought to the brink of ruin. During that period of time, certain senior American military officers adhered to quite rigid positions, and with their assurances and explanations in support of the protection of West Berlin, they even went so far as to not rule out the possibility of going to war with the Soviet Union. The French insistence (at that time France was economically weak) that aid in food and necessary raw materials for the citizens of West Berlin be organized through an air bridge, with a large number of French, British and American planes, calmed the high tension. The strong determination of the Western countries to show resistance to Russian communism was the basic motive to succeed in finalizing the action, which was carried out in extremely difficult winter conditions and with material losses. After May 9, 1949, Stalin realized that he could not expel the Western Allies from West Berlin by force, he admitted defeat in a certain way and gradually released the established blockade on Berlin.

Shortly after the crisis, all parties realized that Germany would not be unified, after which free democratic elections followed in West Germany, in which the Christian Democratic Party won, Adenauer became chancellor, and Bonn became the capital. The Democratic People's Republic of Germany was established in East Germany under Russian sponsorship, so that the two Germanys were divided by strong fortification barriers. As a result of the Second World War, there was great confusion about the role that the United States would eventually play in Europe. Will Franklin Roosevelt turn out to be the second Woodrow Wilson, a president who wanted the active role of the United States in European politics, and in which direction was he cut by the Senate and the American people ? Many European governments, including the British one in particular, were worried about whether Washington would not have a sufficiently active interest in their affairs, and it seems that there was quite valid evidence that confirmed such a fear. Ango - American cooperation in the development of atomic weapons was quickly completed by the Truman administration, that is, immediately after the end of the war; American credit to Britain in 1945-1946 was far less generous than London expected ; The United States of America was returning the occupying forces from

the continent. Only the international crisis in the spring of 1948 made the Truman administration agree to the creation of the Atlantic Security Organization, rather than the simple support of the European system.[14]

Regarding European integration, Washington exerted strong pressure to establish a stronger supranational unit as soon as possible, but soon had to face disappointment. The Europeans refused to integrate their national economies under the Marshall Plan to the extent desired by the Truman administration. From a political point of view, Britain was firmly opposed to any supranational framework, while France refrained from assuming a leadership role without British involvement. Later, rather than sooner, NATO was created as a result of the outbreak of the crisis surrounding the subject of German rearmament.[15]

For the first time in peacetime history, the United States together with Canada and 10 other countries from Western Europe (Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Italy, Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) on April 4, 1949 in Washington. form the military anti - communist Alliance, which they call the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As a result of the aforementioned agreement, the Western European countries and Canada were withdrawn under American leadership, and Paris was designated as the headquarters of the organization. The most important body of NATO was the Permanent Council established in 1952, composed of representatives of all the member countries and which assumed not only military functions, but also had an emphasized intention to increase the cooperation between the member countries in the economic and cultural field. Although it was founded as a defense organization against communist aggression, the beginning of NATO's action simultaneously marks the end of the American isolationist policy and represents a successful step towards further fruitful European and trans - Atlantic cooperation, because the real strong efforts to enrich the cooperation between the Western European countries and The United States of America happened right after its formation.

Tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union began to decrease after 1953, primarily due to the fact that both countries possessed atomic weapons and at the same time began to look for appropriate solutions in order to avoid the possibility of entering into an unwanted adventure of a direct military duel. The second reason is the real relations between the superpowers and their satellites, which are slowly starting to weaken and at the same time create conditions for the relations between

14 Andrews, D.M., 2005. *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress*. Cambridge University Press. p.11-12.
15 Ibid., p.12

the superpowers to improve again. In Europe, the Far and Middle East, the interests of Western European countries often collide with those of the United States, with European countries often refusing to invest more funds in military expenditures. European countries refused to participate in US military interventions in Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand and Laos. At the same time, the United States of America tried to help the Arab countries in order to neutralize the attention of the Russians, although later they did not get involved in the Anglo - French intervention in Egypt either.

After the death of Stalin in 1953, the relations of the Soviet Union with the member states of the Warsaw Pact also changed, to which greater democratic rights were granted and certain forms of transition to socialism were approved, gaining greater independence in the economic sphere (Poland and Czechoslovakia)., and some seek and receive greater autonomy in the political sphere as well (Hungary). The meeting of Presidents Nikita Khrushchev (Soviet Union) and Dwight Eisenhower (United States of America) at the Geneva Conference in 1955, the events in Hungary from November 1956 followed by popular protests and the entry of Russian troops into Budapest which were not condemned by the United States of America, as well as the role of the United States in the Suez crisis and its referral to the United States of America to provide assistance to the British and French in the attack on Egypt (the fact that Washington forced its two partners to stop the invasion of Egypt will play a large shadow role in the future relations between the three capitals [16]), as events at the given moment clearly showed that there was a rapprochement of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

A black spot in the relations between the United States and its European allies in the period of the late fifties and early sixties of the last century are the occasional misunderstandings between the United States and France. They were caused as a result of the perceived anti-American policy of President Charles de Gaulle, of which the French opposition to British membership in the European Economic Community from 1963 and the French decision to leave the military structure of NATO in 1966 stand out.

The closer and peaceful cooperation between the East and the West, i.e. the United States of America and the Soviet Union in the period up to the 60s of the 20th century, seriously contributed to strengthening the political and economic relations between the United States of America and Western European countries, regardless of the occasional misunderstandings that arose between the transatlantic partners in the previous period.

16 Ibid., p.12

INSTITUTIONAL AND CONTRACTUAL COOPERATION

The signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Helsinki in 1975 is considered by many to be the official end of the Cold War. With the mentioned act, the great powers along with thirty one European nations agreed to set the post war borders and formally accept the division of Eastern and Western Europe.

The Helsinki Final Act contained three separate " baskets" of agreements. The first was a final solution for European territorial borders, which were universally reinforced as an important step forward and as the end of an era. This led naturally to the second basket, closer trade and cultural ties between West and East, with both sides happy. The third basket from Helsinki was the one that caused the biggest problems, and it related to humanitarian issues and human rights.[17] The beginning of the new administration of the President of the United States of America, Jimmy Carter, simultaneously marks the beginning of the project of trust in the new approach to liberal idealism. Regardless of the American success at Camp David, with which a definite peace solution was reached between Israel and Egypt, they are still entering an era of serious problems with the Soviet Union.

The process of breaking the détente policy was accelerated by the Soviet unilateral destabilization of the military status quo. As part of a program to replace old nuclear missiles with much more modern ones, the Soviet Union in 1978 began deploying their new SS -20 solid-fuel missiles, which are extremely technically advanced and capable of reaching any part of Europe or the Middle East. East. Even more than that, they were mobile, capable of being transported by large trucks, and could be hidden in a way previously not possible with the SS -4 and SS -3 missiles. The new mobile nuclear missile theater has seriously changed the military balance on the ground in Europe and set off alarm bells in European capitals and NATO headquarters. [18]Washington's answer to Europe's fear of SS -20 missiles was in the solution directed towards their increased investment in their own defense and additional investment in some conventional weapons. It was an alarming but expensive option.[19]

The period from 1981 to 1985, when Ronald Reagan was the president of the United States, political and military analysts call it the period of the Second Cold War. Then tensions, real threats and confrontations between the two military superpowers grow

17 Hughes, J.W., 2006. *The Cold War*. Constable & Robinson Ltd. p.264
18 Ibid., p.269
19 Ibid., p.270

to an extremely high degree. In the same period of time, three presidents change in the Soviet Union, and at the same time, their concern increases because of the increase in technical superiority of NATO in the segment of defense of air and water space and in observation systems. In the conditions of increased American power and a serious political, economic and technological crisis within the Soviet Union, in November 1985, the Russian-American Summit was held at the highest level in Geneva, during which Presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev gave the first signals pointing to the conclusion of the Cold War. At the same time, the United States invests in the development of modern and space weapons programs, conducts a strong economic and informational propaganda against the Soviet Union, and lowers the price of oil, which is one of the main sources of income of the Soviet Union. They help supply weapons to the Afghan Mujahideen and attack the moral legitimacy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, they help independent freedom movements in many parts of the world. With such cumulative measures of constant political, economic and military pressure, they basically undermine the survival of the communist Soviet system and the entire Eastern Bloc.

The mentioned processes have a far-reaching historical dimension and have a strong reflection on the development of further institutional and contractual cooperation between the United States of America and EU member states.

Diplomatic relations between the EU and the US were established in 1950, and the US was the first non-EU country to officially recognize the Coal and Steel Community and in 1953 sent its official representative to Brussels. The agreement that the United States of America has signed with the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) in 1959 is the first formal act of cooperation between the two entities. The Transatlantic Declaration of 1990 formalizes relations between the US and the EU, while five years later the New Transatlantic Agenda creates a modified framework for relations, including a plan of joint actions in the four areas of : promoting peace, stability, democracy and development ; the response to global challenges ; participation in the liberalization, expansion and improvement of communication ; and guaranteeing long-term partnership commitments.[20]

The main goals in the strengthening of partnership and cooperation according to the Transatlantic Declaration are the support of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, the protection of peace and international security, strengthening the role of the UN, supporting the development of the world economy and sustainable economic

20 European Union. EU-United States of America Relations <http://eurunion.org/eu/EU-US-Relations/Agendas-Dialogues-Summits.html>

development, promoting on market principles, assistance to underdeveloped countries and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the realization of their political and economic reforms and support of their participation in multilateral institutions, international trade and finance.[21] In order to achieve common goals, the EC and its member states and the United States of America have agreed to mutually inform and consult on important political and economic issues of common interest. Both sides also agreed that in order to maintain regular dialogue, consultations will be held twice a year at the highest level and at the level of foreign ministers.

Between the United States of America and the EU there is also a Transatlantic Business Dialogue which, in addition to the European Commission and the US Department of Commerce, includes more than thirty leaders of American and European corporations who jointly try to eliminate obstacles in international business, establish effective regulations and encourage investments., trade and the creation of new jobs. Within the framework of the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue, more than sixty consumer organizations from the United States of America and the EU member states are jointly present, which provide joint recommendations and focus on issues that include financial services, food safety, intellectual property, climate change, development of nanotechnology, etc.

The Transatlantic Economic Council is chaired by the EU Trade Commissioner and the US Deputy National Security Advisor responsible for economic affairs. As a high-level forum, it is responsible for more complex issues related to investments, financial markets, mutual recognition of accounting standards, trade assurance as well as resolution of more regulatory issues. TES is advised by representatives of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, the Transatlantic Legislative Dialogue and the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue.

The transatlantic legislative dialogue takes place between the European Parliament and the US Congress and promotes cooperation between legislators in various issues of foreign policy, economy, energy, environment, etc. It contributes to improvement, harmonization and an appropriate approach in the drafting of legislation and regulation, and avoids the possibility of misunderstandings, disputes and conflicts arising later in relation to various issues of common interest.[22] Since 2004, the Dialogue on Security in Transport and Borders has started, within which the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice are involved on the American side, and several commissioners and ministries of the EU member states on the EU side.

21 http://eeas.europa.eu/us/docs/trans_declaration_90_en.pdf

22 Delegation of the European Union, 2010. *EU Focus*. p.3

Cooperation in the field of foreign policy, crisis management, conflict prevention and capacity building practically takes place within the framework of the joint global responsibility and partnership for stabilizing the Balkans and Kosovo, but also for solving a number of foreign-political issues, including the Middle East. peace process, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, South Korea, Pakistan, Arab Spring, stopping the arms race, regional conflicts, etc.

Extremely high on the joint agenda of the United States of America and the EU is the development of cooperation in the segment of justice and internal affairs. In the mentioned segment, it could be concluded that regular high-level meetings are held between the US and the EU to discuss issues related to border protection, visa-free transatlantic travel, information sharing for law enforcement purposes. and in order to respond appropriately and promptly to terrorist threats.

For the effective implementation of the mentioned cooperation between the United States of America and the EU, several specific agreements have been signed. Among them, we first single out the Agreement on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, with which the Council of the EU, with a special decision [23]from 2003, authorizes the signing of the said agreement, with the main goal of improving cooperation and enabling common and more effective fight against transnational crime and terrorism. The agreement on the transfer of reports on the names of passengers in air traffic (signed on October 19, 2006) [24], the Agreement on the protection and fight against crime and terrorism, as well as some other contractual arrangements that are in the process of negotiations and before signing. The agreement on cooperation in science and technology specifically encourages transatlantic scientific cooperation, joint research activities in the fields of medicine, biotechnology, the environment, non-nuclear and renewable energy, etc.

The EU-US Education Agreement covers two programs (the EU-US Atlantis Program in Higher Education and Vocational Training and the Schumann-Fulbright Program), which are jointly established and managed by the European Commission and the US Department of Education. The Forum for Education Policy, in turn, influences the strengthening of educational cooperation between the United States of America and the EU and provides opportunities for the exchange of ideas about challenges and trends in the spheres of higher education reforms.

23 Council Decision 2003/516/EC, Official Journal of EU, L 181, 19/07/2003 P.0025 - 0026
24 Council Decision 2007/551/CSFP/JHA, Official Journal of the EU, L 204/16, 4.8.2007.

During the Summit of the EU and the United States of America, held in November 2009 in Washington, a new group was formed, i.e. the US-EU Energy Council, specifically focused on issues involving energy security, new technologies, energy policy and research. At the same summit, after more than a decade, the Development Dialogue between the US and the EU was re-launched, designed to address the issue of poverty at the global level with its priorities including the Millennium Development Goals, food security and climate change.[25] The European Agenda 2010 seems to be a strong message towards unity and stability. The transatlantic agenda of 2010 should be a logical answer. EU-US relations need long-term conceptual support just as they need day-to-day management of individual conflicts.[26]

How important the cooperation between the two transatlantic partners is in the context of the political and economic development of the entire world is shown by the fact that they, with 12 percent of the world's population, are responsible for more than half of the global economy, in 2008 they accounted for 40 percent of world trade, and jointly provide about 80 percent of the development aid in the whole world.

The relationship between the United States and the European Union from 2010 to 2023 has been characterized by a series of key developments that reflect the depth and complexity of their interactions. This period, marked by significant political, economic, and social changes, has seen both cooperation and challenges in the transatlantic relationship.

The political leadership and diplomatic relations during this period played a pivotal role in shaping the nature of the relationship. The Obama administration's tenure was marked by a collaborative approach towards Europe, focusing on strengthening alliances and pursuing joint diplomatic efforts. However, the Trump administration brought a noticeable shift, often characterized by a more unilateral U.S. foreign policy and occasional tensions with European allies over issues like NATO contributions and trade policies. The Biden administration, as of 2021, signaled a return to more traditional U.S. foreign policy, emphasizing the rebuilding of alliances and multilateral cooperation.

Economic and trade relations were also a focal point, with the initiation of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations in 2013 being a significant attempt to create one of the world's largest free-trade zones. Despite

25 Delegation of the European Union, 2010. *EU Focus*. p.2

26 Burghardt, G., 2000. European Integration – The need for a Much More Ambitious Transatlantic Agenda. *European Affairs*, Volume 1, Number 3, p.38

this, the negotiations faced numerous challenges and were ultimately put on hold. Trade disputes arose during this period, including tariffs imposed by the Trump administration on European steel and aluminum and the EU's retaliatory tariffs. The Biden administration sought to ease some of these tensions and re-engage in cooperative economic dialogues.

In the realm of security and defense, NATO remained a cornerstone of U.S.-EU cooperation. The U.S. consistently urged European NATO members to increase their defense spending, a stance that became particularly pronounced during the Trump administration. The Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 and later current events in Eastern Europe led to a renewed impetus on collective defense and security, thus underscoring the strategic importance of the transatlantic alliance.

Climate change and environmental policy have been areas of varying positions between the U.S. and the EU. The U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement under President Trump marked a significant divergence, but the rejoining of the agreement under President Biden realigned the U.S. with the EU's commitment to addressing climate change and promoting sustainability initiatives.

The digital economy and data privacy have emerged as prominent issues in U.S.-EU relations. The invalidation of the Safe Harbor agreement in 2015 and later the Privacy Shield framework in 2020 raised concerns over data transfers and privacy protections. Efforts to establish new frameworks for the safe and legal transfer of personal data across the Atlantic have been ongoing.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic that began in late 2019 in its on way tested the U.S.-EU cooperation in public health and crisis management. The initial U.S. response under the Trump administration was domestic focused in deep contradiction with the EU's focus on a coordinated intra-European response. The Biden administration marked a change and shift towards a more collaboration with international partners, including the EU, in addressing the pandemic and its aftermath.

Relations with China and Russia also posed complex challenges for U.S.-EU relations, balancing economic interests with concerns over human rights, trade practices, and geopolitical aggressions. The approach to China has been particularly multifaceted, with both the U.S. and the EU seeking to engage China on issues like climate change while also addressing concerns over security, technology, and human rights.

Generally, the period from 2010 to 2023 in U.S.-EU relations was marked by significant developments across various areas. While moments of tension and divergence,

particularly under the Trump administration, were quite clear, the general path has been one of cooperation and a shared commitment to addressing global challenges. Despite being tested, the relationship has proved resilient, adapting to changing political landscapes and evolving global political, economic and social dynamics.

CONCLUSION: LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE IN A COMPLEX GEO-POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Through an analysis of the transatlantic relationship between the United States and Europe, it is evident that this partnership, integral to the fabric of global diplomacy and economic stability, is undergoing a period of significant transformation. Historically, this relationship has been anchored in shared democratic values, mutual security interests, and a commitment to a liberal international order. However, recent developments have brought to the fore a range of challenges and opportunities that are reshaping this alliance. At the geopolitical level, the relationship is being tested by a resurgence of traditional security threats and the emergence of new global powers. The U.S. and Europe's response to Russian aggression, particularly in the context of the Ukraine crisis, has highlighted the continued relevance and necessity of NATO. This situation has not only reaffirmed the alliance's commitment to collective defense but also prompted an increased focus on military spending and joint training exercises. Additionally, the rise of China as a global power poses a complex challenge, necessitating a nuanced and coordinated transatlantic strategy to address economic, technological, and security dimensions. Economically, the transatlantic relationship is a linchpin of the global economy, with trade and investment flows between the U.S. and Europe being crucial for global economic stability. Efforts to negotiate new trade agreements such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) illustrate the ongoing commitment to strengthening economic ties. These negotiations aim not only to reduce trade barriers but also to harmonize regulations and standards, facilitating smoother transnational business operations. However, this economic partnership has faced hurdles, including disputes over digital taxation, agricultural policies, and the protection of intellectual property. Despite these challenges, the mutual benefits of a robust trade relationship continue to drive efforts towards deeper economic integration.

The shared response to climate change and the pursuit of sustainable energy policies have become increasingly prominent in the transatlantic dialogue. The U.S. rejoining the Paris Agreement marked a significant step towards renewed cooperation in tackling global warming. Joint initiatives in renewable energy, carbon trading systems,

and sustainable development goals underscore a collective resolve to address environmental challenges. The energy crises, exacerbated by geopolitical tensions and the COVID-19 pandemic, have underlined the urgency of reducing dependency on fossil fuels and transitioning to greener energy sources.

In the domain of technology and cybersecurity, the transatlantic partners are navigating a landscape where technological advancement is rapid and pervasive. Issues such as data privacy, the regulation of big tech companies, and the ethical use of artificial intelligence are at the forefront of discussions. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe has set a precedent for data protection, influencing global norms and standards. The U.S. and Europe's collaboration in these areas is crucial for ensuring that technological developments are in line with democratic principles and respect for human rights.

The global health arena, particularly highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, has become a key area of transatlantic cooperation. The pandemic has underscored the importance of international collaboration in health, from vaccine development and distribution to the sharing of public health strategies. This collaboration serves as a model for addressing future global health emergencies, emphasizing the need for preparedness and a coordinated approach.

Despite these numerous areas of cooperation, the transatlantic relationship faces its fair share of challenges. Various and divergent approaches to foreign policy issues, such as the Iran nuclear deal and the Middle East peace process, have led to diplomatic tensions. Internal political dynamics, such as the rise of nationalist and populist movements, have added additional complexity to this partnership. Furthermore, public opinion on both sides of the Atlantic sometimes diverges significantly on key issues, reflecting a diverse and sometimes fragmented political landscape. What we can now conclude is that the transatlantic relationship between the United States and Europe is at a pivotal juncture and crucial axiom of development. As this partnership navigates the complexities of the 21st century, it must balance national interests with shared values and goals. The ability to adapt to shifting geopolitical, economic, and technological landscapes will be crucial for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of this alliance. In that sense, continued dialogue, mutual understanding, and a willingness to address emerging challenges collaboratively will be essential for sustaining the transatlantic relationship as a cornerstone of global stability and prosperity.

WORKS CITED

1. Burghardt, G., 2000. European Integration – The need for a Much More Ambitious Transatlantic Agenda. *European Affairs*, Volume 1, Number 3.
2. Dobson, A.P., Marsh, S., 2001. *US Foreign Policy since 1945*. Routledge. London.
3. Hughes, J.W., 2006. *The Cold War*. Constable & Robinson Ltd. London.
4. Hardt, M., Negri, A., 2004. *Multitude, War Democracy in the Age of Empire*. The Penguin Press. New York.
5. Reid, T.R., 2004. *The United States of Europe, The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy*. The Penguin Press. New York.
6. Schain, M.A., 2001. *The Marshall Plan: fifty years after*. Palgrave.
7. Shuck, P.H. and Wilson, J.Q. eds., 2008 Editors. *Understanding America*. Public Affairs. New York.
8. Sadowski, Y., 2006. *The Myth of Global Chaos*. In: Contemporary Dabates in International Relations, Thomson Wadsworth. p.625
9. Woods, T.E., 2004. The Politically Incorrect Guide to American History. Regenry Publishing.
10. Zürcher, E.J., 1993, Turkey - A Modern History. I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd. London- New York.
11. 1947. Marshall Sees Europe in Need of Vast New U.S. Aid; Urges Self-Help in Reconstruction. *Washington Post*, June 6.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Ulrich Haltern

born in Bochum in 1967, holds the chair in public law, European law and philosophy of law at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich.

Полемика
УДК: 342.511-053.9(73)

Ulrich Haltern

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN?

AMERICA'S ELDERLY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AS A CRISIS OF THE BODY OF POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

POLITICAL THOUGHT

67

The world's oldest democracy is currently also the oldest with regard to its highest decision-makers. Once the youngest senator, today, Joe Biden is the oldest president the USA has ever had. Should he be re-elected, he would leave the White House at age 86. The Republicans' leading candidate Donald Trump is only three years younger. Bill Clinton (who was president thirty years ago), George W. Bush (twenty years ago) as well as Barack Obama (ten years ago) are all younger than Biden and Trump.

Mitch McConnell, the longest-serving Senate majority leader in American history, is 81, just like Bernie Sanders, who many left-wing Democrats laid their hopes on in the last two Democratic primaries. The current Senate is the second oldest, the House of Representatives the third oldest in American history. Sometimes, age shows. A few weeks ago, during a press conference, McConnell froze in front of the microphone for tormenting 20 seconds. Dianne Feinstein, California's 90-year-old senator, has some cognitive issues and sometimes forgets that she has already spoken. 51-year-old Nikki Haley, Trump's former ambassador to the U.N. and present (unpromising) competitor in the presidential elections, demands to introduce tests for the mental condition of politicians over 75 (just as unpromising).

ALIENATION FROM THE YOUNGER

The question whether a person over 80 can ideally or at least reliably fulfil an office such as president of the US is undoubtedly important, for it is rather worrying that Americans discuss the presidential elections with the same concerns as the question whether their parents should still be driving a car. More interesting, however, is the influence of this kind of gerontocracy on the relation between voters and elected, as well as on the system of democratic representation in general. It is not daring to think that a political system, in which the president is more than twice as old as the average citizen (namely 38 years), lacks sufficient contact with its very population.

The thought can be extended into a sociological model of generation conflict (as political scientist Kevin Munger does in his book *The Generation Gap*), in which the boomer generation with its good networks gets the better of the millennials and Generation Z. However, it remains unexplained why other democracies are not gerontocratic. In Europe, the exact opposite is the case: while the population is getting older, political decision-makers are getting younger and younger. Examples include Volodymyr Zelensky, 45, Great Britain's Rishi Sunak, 43, Italy's Giorgia Meloni, 46, Spain's Pedro Sánchez, 51, and Finland's Petteri Orpo, 53. The latter succeeded Sanna Marin, who had just turned 34 when she got elected in 2019. Denmark's Mette

Frederiksen is 45, Holland's 56-year-old Mark Rutte was elected into office at 43, Poland's Mateusz Morawiecki is 55, and French president Emmanuel Macron, elected at 39, is Europe's elder statesman at 45 today. Angela Merkel was 51 when she was first elected Federal Chancellor, and even Olaf Scholz with his 65 years is still a youngster when compared to Biden and Trump.

The age of American political leaders is alienating younger people from politics. The *Economist* has shown that the extent to which older voters outrival younger ones is considerably greater in the USA than in other OECD countries. Other studies have proven that the average age of participants in local elections in the USA is 57, almost one generation older than the average eligible voter. While assuming that older politicians only engage in self-serving politics would be a short-sighted approach to identity politics, a problem of political participation is still evident, and it translates directly into a partaking problem, which grows into a problem of legitimacy.

The legitimacy problem is far more than a shortcoming to be sociologically explored, since it reaches into the core of the specifically American understanding of representation, legitimacy and identity. To understand this, we need to expand a bit. Political identity describes how individuals situate themselves within the political sphere, melding individual and collective identity. Its reference point is the political collective referred to as state or, sometimes, nation.

In the USA, this reference point is much more imagined as an organism than in Europe, where the organic structure of the state has given way to discourse and communication, and where political identity is much more found in the word. The American idea of corporeality − a fusion of body politic and body of the people, reminiscent of the frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan in its composite nature − provides the state with a life and a value of its own, as an organic appearance of the people. When we as Europeans set foot on American soil, we cannot escape the manifestations of the idea of this value of its own, however strange they may seem to us, from the flag to the civil-religious rituals such as the Pledge of Allegiance, an oath of loyalty towards the nation and the flag of the United States. The higher idea embodied in the body politic of the state justifies its absolute demands towards the civic body that constitutes it, and the individual puts himself at its service: "Nothing is more typical of the American character than to give everything for a greater cause", said Barack Obama in his inaugural address. Herein lies an ambivalence of American identity, which, on the one hand, emphasises great individuality and freedom, which should strive under the rule of law, but at the same time wraps this individuality into a great collective narrative.

The counterbalance of great individual freedom is participation in the promises of the body politic, which offers the citizens a past that is greater than the individual body's past and yet becomes one's own personal past, as well as a future that transcends the end of one's individual life. In a rough sea of contingency and confusion, collective memories and hopes promise the individual the possibility of exact location in time and space while becoming part of a great, cross-generational progression project.

THE AMERICAN NATION'S BIG BANG

Since this kind of imaginative space cannot be comprehended by intuition, it requires a powerful myth. In the USA, it is the myth of the revolution, in which the sovereign people, *We the People*, manifested itself and brought the state into existence. It is this big bang that unleashed political power and liberal self-government (unlike Europe's revolutions, which politically restricted existing monarchic power), and therefore legitimation and legitimacy revolve around this moment of emergence only. The revolutionaries become the heroic founding fathers that the following post-heroic generations are to keep referring to: "Oh! Let the youth of this country, the aspiring proud sons of Columbia, fraught with every virtue, become a race of God-like Washingtons", wrote US-politician Thomas Dunn English. In emulation of the founding fathers, the order that they confided to the sons is enshrined as a duty that stabilises the family in which the political and the private implode into each other.

REVERENCE FOR THE CONSTITUTION

When both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Revolution, the living corporeality came to its end. When it was replaced by the Constitution, in which the revolutionary revelation is enshrined, the three steps were completed: revelation – revolution – constitution. Safeguarding the sense and meaning of communality can only be provided by preserving the sense and meaning of the Constitution – a back reference which, for its part, had civil-religious traits. In his 1838 speech at the Young Men's Lyceum, a debating club in Springfield, Abraham Lincoln said: "To the support of the Constitution and Laws, let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor; — let every man remember that to violate the law, is to trample on the blood of his father. Let it become the political religion of the nation; and let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay, of all sexes and tongues, and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly upon its altars." The true

representation of the sovereign is now embodied in the Constitution, and access to collective meaning arises from reverence for the Constitution, which replaced those who, with their bodies, stood up for the revolutionary idea. As Lincoln put it, the revolutionary bodies are "a living history to be found in every family. But those histories are gone."

Lincoln now read the American history which had been read from the revolutionary bodies from the Constitution – and, with it, the American nation. The Constitution's text participates in the authenticity of the revolutionary body texts. This imagined constellation has led to the Constitution's normative surplus as well as to how it is treated. Not only is it displayed like a religious sanctum at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia (in 2015, when I was accompanying then Federal President Joachim Gauck on his visit to the USA and we were standing in a room with dimmed lights in front of the brightly illuminated Constitution, he whispered to me: "Wouldn't it be great to do the same with our Basic Law?"). It also provides grounds for a way of interpretation that seems strange to us, so-called originalism, which, instead of a teleological development, as is the case in Germany, has the aim of preserving the original understanding of a text at the time of its adoption (and it for sure would not be great if we did the same with our Basic Law). The political and legal starting point is loyalty towards the origin and its text instead of responsibility towards the world and its needs.

Therefore, American presidents are not only seen as leaders who coin and implement political programmes, but always also as elements of America's imagined past, in which the nation recognises itself. The nation wants to be led, but it also wants to see its reflection. This reflection is twofold, corporeal and ideal.

THE PRESIDENT AS A TRANSUBSTANTIATION OF THE POPULAR SOVEREIGN

At first, the corporeal reflection is as comprehensible as it is enigmatic. It is comprehensible because the public is endlessly fascinated by looking at presidential bodies and because presidents stage themselves as physically identifiable transubstantiations of the popular sovereign. Barack Obama, for instance, who, being black, did not reflect the majority of Americans, put it the way that American history "has seared into my genetic makeup the idea that this nation is more than the sum of its parts — that out of many, we are truly one." Even more enigmatic it seems that in 2024, two about eighty-year-old men are expected to run for presidency. This has little to do with experience that could be translated into political wisdom, for the results of the presidential elections up to Trump's defeat point into the opposite direction. Namely, they

show decreasing appreciation of political experience from Clinton to Bush, from Bush to Obama and from Obama to Trump.

Meanwhile, reflection requires positioning oneself in the national narrative of origin. This collective imagination is the corridor of argumentation in which the presidents have to position themselves in terms of history of ideas. Again, we can learn from Obama. He closely followed Lincoln's example and adopted his civil religious, morally charged vision of a fusion between the individual and the collective body. Lincoln had fully developed this vision in his Gettysburg speech, in which the semantic of patriotism and love finds its vehicle, culminating in the theme of sacrifice and not ignoring the willingness to sacrifice oneself. At the very end of his book *The Audacity of Hope,* Obama describes how his Washington evening jogging routes lead him to the Lincoln Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool. Lincoln and Martin Luther King play a key role in Obama's account. He, both actually and figuratively, runs towards the two of them, as if they were present for real (and not only their memorials and memories), or as if Obama was able to transcend time. He is reading Lincoln's Gettysburg speech and second inaugural address. In his head, he hears King's famous "I have a dream" speech and sees the audience of 250.000 at the Reflecting Pool. Lincoln, King, Obama and the nation become one, thus wondrously and wonderfully suspending the rules of time and space and sweeping along all Americans.

What Lincoln and King stand out for, as Obama wrote, is the fact that "in the service of bringing an unfinished Union to completion, they ultimately gave their lives". As readers, we see the assassinations and hear the shots; Obama has told us that they died serving the Constitution and its mission to complete the Union. It is their blood that authenticates the Constitution, it is their death that lets us live. The entire universe of transubstantiation is applied here. Obama finishes his book with a final cadence which has us remain silent in awe, for we have finally come full circle: "It is this process that I would like to be part of." The founding fathers' sacrifice replicates in Lincoln and then in King. Obama tells us that he, too, is prepared.

ALLOWING GETAWAYS

Despite their differences, both Trump and Biden position themselves in the imagined corridor of the American narrative of origin. Trump embodies the core of one of the most popular and most appreciated credos of the American dream: *that the loot we've scooped up will belong to us forever and that history allows clean getaways*. Herein lies the other, darker side of the American dream: individualistic, selfish, willing to use violence, greedy and irresponsible. Actually, as we know at least since Cormac McCarthy's *No Country For*

Old Men, this story can be found in every American crime thriller that gets by with these few set pieces: too much temptation, too many bad and weak men, too few good and strong men, and all this against the background of endless freedom and unlimited space – freedom for bad decisions and space for getting away from their consequences.

Biden, on the other hand, embodies another aspect of the imagined corridor, being a man whose political career is embedded in a personal history of tragedy, loss and grief. In 1972, he lost his first wife and little daughter in a car accident. His surviving son Beau died of a brain tumour in 2015. This history did not only have an impact on many of his political decisions, but also shaped him as a person. His friends and foes alike agree that he has an extraordinary gift for relating to people, for listening and for consoling. In a country that was hit by Corona harder than average, with far more than one million deaths, and whose population is strongly polarised and unsettled, having the ability to treat wounds is worth a lot. Biden describes himself as a "dreamer burdened with reality". The fact that he translates his own experience of grief into a political message of consolation while using a rhetoric of dignity and thereby showing what it means to be "a good man" reminds many of an ideal of decency, understanding and care that they miss in the present day. John McCain's daughter once said that this is even more true since Biden's instinct to ease other people's pain is in stark contrast to his political opponent, who seems to be enjoying it.

„NOT MY PRESIDENT"

In the past, the simultaneous presence in the imagined corridor of the American dream narrative – the authentication of the same myth, only with different scopes – has been sufficient to direct the signposts of the American political sphere to unity rather than disintegration. However, this was not the case before the Civil War, when the Supreme Court under Roger Taney delivered the awful Dred Scott ruling that abounded with racist views, denied black people the ability to be citizens and defined citizenship in terms of race. On the other side was President Abraham Lincoln. Both of them are deeply rooted in the American narrative, which treats nation as family: Taney pursued a racist, biologistic communitarianism that was countered by Lincoln's moral communitarianism. For both, the individual and the collective were running in parallel, with the one collapsing into the other, and both participated in the myth of the American body politic: Taney held speeches on the ban on mixed marriages, while Lincoln provided the Battle of Gettysburg with meaning by translating the deaths of the fallen into life for the nation. However, this common feature was not sufficient to avoid a *house divided*, the 1858 warning of which nevertheless led into the Civil War.

Today, Americans are once again talking about a civil war, and it is not so far-fetched. Trump and his supporters neither accept their defeat in the elections nor the legitimacy of the Biden administration, just as liberals had kept insisting that Trump was *not my president*. Congress is deeply divided. Territorial changes of election districts and election concessions are running at full speed in order to manipulate the next elections. The Supreme Court with its conservative super majority, made possible by Trump appointing three justices, pursues an ultra-reactionary, sometimes even extremist political course.

Observing the political system of the USA, one has to come to the conclusion that it is shattered in many ways. Opinions on how much broken it actually is differ only slightly, while there is agreement on the absence of a generally accepted perspective for legitimate decisions that affect the entire community. Without such a perspective, there is no sovereign power of decision, and decisions are not as much decisions as they are party-controlled views that are cancelled at the next opportunity rather than respected. The *we* in *We the people* lies in shatters. The collapse of sovereign power of decision marks the beginning of a civil war. Institutions that used to represent unity are now the source of division and disruption. This is not only true for the political institutions, but also for the judicial ones.

BODIES AND KINGS

All of a sudden, the rule of law is not essentially different from political dispute. Instead of representing alternative visions of different priorities within the popular sovereign, Republicans and Democrats now represent starting points for political identities. Both deny each other the right to speak with the voice of the sovereign, both play on the universe of the political in the form of ultimate values. Opposition is turning into enmity. Some are already witnessing beginnings of violence, such as the American journalist and writer Jeff Sharlet. Even if one is not fond of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, his notion of a slow *civil war as political paradigm* seems to make sense here, which brings us back to the corporeal reflection of the nation.

Many aspects point to the age of the presumed presidential candidates not being a criterion that is amenable to a unifying sociological analysis. Instead, two completely different vectors are at work. Not only does Donald Trump lend a voice to the Republicans' fear of multiple expulsion, such as by illegal immigrants or by alien elite cultures, but he also personifies the extended middle finger to everything that represents political and democratic rules, decency, or even abidance to law. In a political system like the American one, which has been subject to the impact of

incredible money flows since the 2010 Supreme Court decision on campaign financing, such behaviour can only be kept up by a sufficient level of wealth, and in Trump's case, it just took time. Joe Biden, on the other hand, is playing the mystic strings of memory of Americans being touched by the *better angels of their nature*, as Lincoln said in his first inaugural address. And that, too, took time.

It is not the king who has two bodies (according to historic Ernst H. Kantorowicz); here, the body has two kings, and by now, they actually stand for two bodies. The problem with representation is less due to the representant than to the represented, which has lost its unity. If we still want to say something unifying with regard to the representants' age, then that could be that, in their increasingly senile frailness, they represent the disintegrating state of the American Constitution and its institutions. Only with good will can we still discern the might and glory of the political power that rests on popular sovereign representation and spreads apart there. However, even a quick glimpse reveals that the coat of power has been hanging loosely over brittle bones for a long time, and that the end of legitimate representation and its reliable decisions could soon be nigh. Ruffling up their feathers, but short of breath and emaciated, the staff runs across the scene, freezes, stumbles or forgets the sentence just started, but that does not matter: the political itself has broken in two, and its standard performers do not represent a nation.

FURTHER READING

Haltern, Ulrich: Obamas politischer Körper, Berlin University Press, Berlin 2009.

- translated from German -
First published in: Die Politische Meinung, 68. Jahrgang, Nr. 582, September/Oktober 2023, p. 72 - 81 https://www.kas.de/de/web/die-politische-meinung/artikel/detail/-/content/no-country-for-old-men

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Annekathrin Kohout

born 1989 in Gera, is a culture and media scientist and freelance writer. Since 2015, she has been operating the blog „Sofrischsogut.com“. Publisher and editor of the magazine „POP. Kultur und Kritik“.

Полемика
УДК: 316.775.3:004.738.5]:316.462
316.658:004.738.5]:316.462

Annekathrin Kohout

NGUYEN'S TILES
HOW INFLUENCERS BECOME AUTHORITIES

POLITICAL THOUGHT

67

Authorities have the power to influence others. If we look at authority as an ascription that does not only result from the exercise of power, rules, obligations and prohibitions, but also from experience, competence and knowledge, persons who have authority can also be defined by the fact that they enjoy a high level of trust. People appreciate their opinion, turn to them for orientation and, in fact, follow them without calling them into question over and over again. The word *influencer* alone conjures up the image of new, significant authorities in today's society. When we hear it, we first think about the exertion of influence as it is done in advertisement, hence we associate influencers with fashion and lifestyle. It is not without reason that Ole Nymoen and Wolfgang M. Schmitt define influencers as *advertisement bodies* ("Werbekörper").[1] However, there are also numerous influencers who engage in politics, activism or journalism, as well as so-called *sciencefluencers*, who do not want to convince viewers to buy anything, but rather to take on certain attitudes or opinions, or even perform political actions. First of all, the degree of influencer authority can be seen from the numbers: How many followers do they have, how many times have their posts been liked, commented on or shared? The latter also allows drawing conclusions with regard to actual appreciation by followers and the influencers' position within a community.

Even if, in the age of attention economy, numbers can constitute the authority of influencers – the more followers the higher the credibility –, they do not explain how they achieve those figures and, accordingly, their authority. The question remains especially enigmatic if, a before becoming an influencer, a person did not have a special social status, pursue a renowned activity or was not associated with a well-known institution. How, then, does the authority of influencers assert itself? By means of knowledge, be it in the area of fashion and styling or in the domain of science and research. This, as such, is nothing new: "Who has knowledge has also authority. He can teach the others", as Niklas Luhmann wrote in *The Science of Society* (1992).[2]

THE CULTURE OF KNOWLEDGE IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Luhmann's quote still applies, even though the culture of knowledge is changing due to social media. New practices and conventions of production, dissemination and depiction of knowledge as well as its individual appropriation are used on Twitter, TikTok, Instagram and YouTube. It has never been as easy as it is today to get information from the net, to adapt it to short postings (*ChatGPT* will have its part in this, as we can see from tutorials that teach us how to train artificial intelligence to create Instagram postings or TikTok scripts) and to publish it, whereas sources are very rarely mentioned.

1 Ole Nymoen / Wolfgang M. Schmitt: Die Ideologie der Werbekörper, Berlin 2021.

2 Niklas Luhmann: Die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft. Frankfurt am Main 1992, p. 149.

Media scientist Johannes Paßmann is spot on when he calls this process a *popularisation of knowledge by means of social media*. In his essay of the same title, he mentions two modes of popularisation: translation and elicitation, defining the latter as a "method to have the displayed material produce reactions that circulate knowledge that is unnamed, unconscious, uninvestigated or in some other way not yet addressed".[3]
The translation of complicated relations and terms has the potential to produce many reactions, especially due to the fact that simplifications are inevitable, so that sometimes "crucial things fade into the background", which, in turn, can lead to misunderstandings. One could say that the popularisation of knowledge is an affordance as such, prompting users to continue and co-produce knowledge, for it is impossible to explain certain terms or concepts exhaustively in ten Instagram slides with a single-line caption or a TikTok video of six seconds. In turn, this means that the content is attractive for influencers because it triggers interaction, which is much sought-after, for it leads to preference by the algorithm, hence boosting the dissemination of the content. It is no coincidence that almost all successful influencers specialise on a certain area of knowledge, be it intellectual or artisan, theoretical or practical. Often, the knowledge is not transferred in an objective way, but rather with a personal touch, or mixed with one's own opinions.
Hence, in social media, the ones who have authority are those whose inputs are not balanced, detailed and exhaustive, but rather those with an across-the-board or incomplete approach, since they provide followers with the possibility to pile in, to add and to feel active.

INFO TILES ON INSTAGRAM

An Instagram format which is popular in science, politics and activism are so-called info tiles. They are often composed solely of text elements and suggest an aesthetic of seriousness. For instance, they can be found on the platforms of Louisa Dellert (*@louisadellert*), who engages in sustainability and environmentalism, Timur (*@timurs.time*), who is focused on queerness, or Hami Nguyen (*@hamidala_*) with her content on (anti-Asian) racism. Nguyen uses several slides to explain a term, a concept, a theory or a current event. When the European asylum reform was discussed in Brussels in early June 2023, she created the following info tiles: The first picture read "In the next to days, the EU‚community of values' will actually abolish the right to asylum, and nobody is watching", with the words "actually abolish the right to asylum" in red letters, in order to stress the urgency of making this information visible.[4] The following tiles were used to convey

3 Johannes Paßmann: „Am Beispiel Rezo. Zwei Modi der Wissenspopularisierung mit Social Media", in: POP. Kultur und Kritik, vol. 15, autumn 2019, pp. 65–76, here p. 66.

4 https://www.instagram.com/p/CtPEE6mMvLi/ [accessed on 19.06.2023].

facts and adding personal views. In the comment section, Nguyen referred to other activist accounts. About 12.000 users reacted to this posting. A controversial discussion was led in the comment section, and, in line with Paßmann's ideas, many users added information and context which had not been included in the post itself.

The fact that, for her followers, Nguyen has become an authority whose opinion can be of general interest and provide some guidance becomes particularly clear when she has to explain herself in her stories for not being able to provide content on every single event. It seems that, with increasing authority, also the pressure to comment on issues beyond one's own key topic rises.

On her tile on the new EU asylum law, Nguyen received a series of comments like the following: "Why haven't I heard of this before? Why don't news broadcasters cover this? Or is it that these things simply don't hit my timeline?" People who read daily or weekly newspapers, watch the news or political talk show will be surprised by such reactions. However, they confirm the not so recent suspicion that "old" media are losing their authority. Therefore, it is time to seriously consider the authorities of the new media: the influencers.

- translated from German -

Fisrt published in Die Politische Meinung, 68. Jahrgang, Nr. 581, Juli/August 2023, p. 74-76.
https://www.kas.de/de/web/die-politische-meinung/artikel/detail/-/content/nguyens-kacheln)

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Amelie Duckwitz

born 1977 in Cologne, professor of media and web sciences, main research on social media, influencer communication and user experience, as well as transformation of digital public(s), Cologne University of Applied Sciences.

Полемика
УДК: 316.775.3:316.46]:004.738.5

Amelie Duckwitz

LIKED
HOW MUCH AUTHORITY DOES ONE HAVE WITH 100.000 FOLLOWERS?

POLITICAL THOUGHT

67

Pamela Reif has 9,5 million, Lisa and Lena have 19,6 million, and Toni Kroos is one of the most successful influencers in Germany with almost forty million Instagram followers. While the international audience is familiar with soccer pro Toni Kroos, Pamela Reif's, Lisa's and Lena's publicity is almost entirely based on self-made videos published on the social media channels YouTube, Musical.ly, TikTok and Instagram. Content made by influencers, or *content creators*, as they like to call themselves, is one of the most widely received forms of internet communication. Slightly more than half (52 per cent) of all online users in Germany follow influencers (see Bitkom 2022), and even 71 per cent of 16- to 24-year-olds (see BVDW 2020).

The term *influencer* already points to their influence potential, which is mostly reflected in product recommendations: one fourth of all followers in Germany state that they have already bought a product advertised by influencers; for the younger age group, this figure is 52,6 per cent (see BVDW 2020). Influencer marketing, where companies pay influencers for advertising their products depending on their reach, has long been established within the marketing mix, creating a worldwide turnover of some estimated 13,8 billion dollars (see Influencer Marketing Hub 2021).

However, influencers do not only recommend products, but also produce entertainment and comedy formats, fitness tutorials, as well as travel and interior inspirations. They show their everyday life with children, dogs, with the challenges brought about by a sustainable or vegan life style or imposed by a medical condition. They stand up for the LGBTQ+ community, struggle against racism, or spread right-wing or xenophobic messages. It would be too short-sighted to reduce influencers to the commercial factor, for they have become an integral part of the daily media repertoire. More than half of 14- to 24-year-olds state that they obtain their information on current events from influencers (see Hölig et al. 2021), and at least since Rezo's video "The destruction of the Christian Democratic Party" in the run-up to the European elections in 2019, even the broad population has taken notice of the fact that influencers contribute to the formation of political opinion.

INFLUENCERS AS NEW AUTHORITIES?

The popularity of influencers, and especially the younger population groups' orientation towards them, gives rise to the question whether we are dealing with a new kind of authority, which is no longer based on a hierarchic social order, but on public attention and visible social consent in the form of follower numbers and likes. Especially in modern society with its increasing mediatisation, individualisation and globalisation (see Krotz

2001), the influence of traditional authorities is decreasing and the very term *authority* is connoted in an increasingly negative way, while influencers seem to be taking on the social function of providing orientation in a contingent world.

It is interesting that, in the English-speaking world, *authority* is used to refer to the success of websites: *page authority*, for instance, is a standard success indicator for search engine optimisation, composed of the number of visits and the number of *backlinks*, i.e. pages that refer to the website. Similarly, in the domain of influencer marketing, their *authority* is operationalised based on their follower numbers and interaction rates. Nevertheless, it is rather a quantitative term based on data, which only implicitly reflects social significance.

In social sciences, the concept of authority goes back to Max Weber (1972), who used it to describe the social construct of domination and power. According to Weber, authority is based on the claimed and recognised competence and superiority of a person, usually related to a function, office or expertise, and legitimises the exercise of power by that person. Authority always points to an unequal relationship between the ones who exercise power and the ones who follow. Authority is attributed in order to reduce complexity within a society, for this kind of authority does not have to be continuously called into question or explained (see Luhmann 1968).

INFLUENCERS AS DIGITAL OPINION LEADERS

What is it, then, that the influencers' success and potential are based on? The phenomenon of some people influencing others in their views, knowledge and behaviour within social networks was already discovered in the *People's Choice* study in the 1940s. Social scientist Paul Lazarsfeld and his co-authors detected that the influence of mass media on the formation of people's political opinion is less important than communication with people in their social environment (see Lazarsfeld et al. 1949). Some people turn out to be so-called opinion leaders, who are considered to be well informed and who are often asked for advice.

Such opinion leaders can be found in every social network, as numerous other studies have shown. They are characterised by attributed expertise or huge involvement, count as strong personalities (see Noelle-Neumann 1983), are early adopters of innovations (see Rogers 2003) and have good social networks. Although they are ascribed expert status, the term authority is rarely found in the comprehensive scientific literature on opinion leaders (see Jungnickel 2017), which is mainly due to the horizontal character

of the influence they develop within their own social class (see Katz / Lazarsfeld 1955). Their credibility, which is seen as an essential factor of their influence potential, is based on the fact that they communicate on their own level, so that the social relationship is not subject to inequality, and that no intent of persuasion is assumed, as is the case with politicians and advertisers.

The opinion leadership of influencers, who are seen as *digital opinion leaders* (see Duckwitz 2019, Frühbrodt / Floren 2019, Schach 2018), has become more professional, even though their intent of persuasion is anticipated: 92 per cent of online users state that they know that influencers earn money by advertising (see Bitkom 2022).

DEVELOPMENT OF A MEDIA-SPECIFIC DYNAMIC

As opposed to interpersonal communication, digital networks are developing a media-specific dynamic, due to which digital opinion leaders can quickly achieve high numbers of views and followers. This effect is supported by the algorithms of platform providers: favoured content is displayed with priority to friends and users with similar profiles in order for them to linger on the platform longer. Within networks which allow everyone to follow everyone, this leads to the typical mathematical distribution of the *long tail* (Anderson 2004, Barabási 2003) with few influencers who are highly popular and a great many whose reach is medium to very small. Only 0,5 per cent have more than a million followers, 6,54 per cent are in the six-digit range, 26,82 per cent have between 20.000 and 100.000 followers, while all the others attend to a niche audience (see Balkanov 2020). Accordingly, influencers as well as opinion leaders are very diverse, disparate and dispersed, which, in turn, makes them interesting for target group marketing.

In persuasion research, credibility is one of the most important factors for exerting influence (see Hovland et al. 1953). Studies have actually shown that influencers are attributed high credibility by their followers (see Duckwitz et al. 2022). Credibility is a multidimensional ascribed construct, primarily based on the factors expertise and trustworthiness, whereas expertise can also result from experience or high involvement with regard to a certain issue. Moreover, influencers are characterised by social proximity to their followers and seem likeable because they share similar ideals and norms. Even though much of public content is highly staged, influencers are seen as authentic by their followers because they offer glimpses into their everyday life and maintain consistent communication in terms of content and time, thus, as it were, remaining true to themselves.

Finally, via social media platforms, influencers and followers engage in a so-called *parasocial* relationship, for it is facilitated by media (see Horton / Wohl 1956; Leißner et al. 2014, p. 248). This relationship is based on mutual expectations and gives rise to typical communication structures: influencers directly address their followers, answer questions and hope for approval, while followers expect a daily update. By means of likes, recipients can express their visible support and thus assign themselves to a social group, or deliberately distance themselves via expressing criticism in the comment section. In social media networks, the *social feedback* becomes visible for everybody (see Kneidinger-Müller 2017, p. 65).

Therefore, influencers can certainly support the search for social orientation and thus close a gap that arises from traditional authorities losing their meaning in modern society. However, their influencing potential is not based on a social relationship characterised by an unequal distribution of power, as the term *authority* would imply. The appeal of being an influencer is based on the fact that everyone can become one, be it due to expertise, creative content, staging one's own personality, skilful balancing of the algorithms or a bit of chance luck.

To stay successful, however, is hard work: Having also played a role in the traditional maintenance of power (see Sofsky / Paris 1991, p. 30), today, communicative orchestration of authenticity is a prerequisite for constantly generating attention. In social media networks, influencers find themselves in a relationship of mutual dependency of followers, typical algorithms, and the companies that cooperate with them: They are influential, but their influence is based on continuous communicative negotiation of credibility and authenticity and the pressure to please the community, which sanctions every deviation by *unfollowing*, which, in turn, calls into question the basis of the business.

The consequences of such behaviour were recently experienced by influencers Fynn Kliemann and Kanye West, who lost followers and cooperation partners due to improper deals with masks and anti-Semitic statements. But followers also punish influencers for any form of paternalism, for they rather want to identify with them than to be lectured by them (see Duckwitz et al. 2022). Users do not only look for orientation in social networks, but also for entertainment, inspiration, distraction and, not least, discount codes. The next trend that will grab their attention is only a swipe away. Authority over 100.000 followers is a very fragile construct.

- translated from German -

First published in: Die Politische Meinung, 68. Jg., Nr. 581, Juli/August 2023, p. 77-81 [ohne wissenschaftlichen Anmerkungsapparat]. https://www.kas.de/de/web/die-politische-meinung/artikel/detail/-/content/geliked

FURTHER READING

1. Duckwitz, Amelie: „Influencer*innen im digitalen Wahlkampf", in: Fuchs, Martin / Motzkau, Martin (eds.): Digitale Wahlkämpfe, Springer VS, Wiesbaden 2023.
2. Schach, Annika / Lommatzsch, Timo (eds.): Influencer Relations: Marketing und PR mit digitalen Meinungsführern, Springer Gabler, Wiesbaden 2018.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Anderson, Chris: „The Long Tail. The future of entertainment is in the millions of niche markets at the shallow end of the bitstream", in: Wired Magazine, vol. 12, no. 10. The Conde Nast Publications, October 2004, www.wired.com/2004/10/tail/ [accessed on 02.06.2023].
2. Baklanov, Nick: „State of Influencer Marketing in Germany. Part 2", in: HypeAuditor, 30.09.2020, https://hypeauditor.com/blog/state-of-influencer-marketing-in-germany-2/ [accessed on 02.06.2023].
3. Barabási, Albert-László: Linked. How Everything is Connected to Everything Else and What It Means for Business, Science and Everyday Life, Plume Books, New York 2003.
4. Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft (BVDW): Mehr als jeder Fünfte: Verkäufe durch Influencer Marketing nehmen laut BVDW-Studie 2020 nochmal zu, Berlin 2020, www.bvdw.org/der-bvdw/news/detail/artikel/mehr-als-jeder-fuenfte-verkaeufe-durch-influencer-marketing-nehmen-laut-bvdw-studie-2020-nochmal-zu/ [accessed on 02.06.2023].
5. Bitkom: Die Hälfte folgt Influencerinnen und Influencern in sozialen Medien, press information, 05.05.2022, www.bitkom.org/Presse/Presseinformation/Haelfte-folgt-Influencern [accessed on 02.06.2023].
6. Duckwitz, Amelie: Influencer als digitale Meinungsführer. Wie Influencer in sozialen Medien den politischen Diskurs beeinflussen – und welche Folgen das für die demokratische Öffentlichkeit hat, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bonn 2019.
7. Duckwitz, Amelie / Funk, Walter / Hielscher, Jana / Schröder, Justin: Influencer in der Verkehrssicherheitskommunikation. Konzeptentwicklung und pilothafte Anwendung. Berichte der Bundesanstalt für Straßenwesen, Mensch und Sicherheit, Fachverlag NW, Bremen 2022.
8. Frühbrodt, Lutz / Floren, Annett: Unboxing YouTube. Im Netzwerk der Profis und Profiteure, Otto-Brenner-Stiftung, Frankfurt am Main 2019.
9. Hölig, Sascha / Wunderlich, Leonie / Hasebrink, Uwe: „Informationsorientierung und Informiertheit bei Jugendlichen und jungen Erwachsenen in Deutschland", in: Media Perspektiven, no. 6/2021, pp. 334–345.
10. Horton, Donald / Wohl, R. Richard: „Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction: Observations on Intimacy at a Distance", in: Psychiatry, vol. 19, no. 3/1956, pp. 215–229.
11. Hovland, Carl I. / Irving, L. Janis / Kelley, Harold H.: Communication and Persuasion. Psychological Studies of Opinion Change, Yale University Press, New Haven 1953.

12. Influencer Marketing Hub: The State of Influencer Marketing 2021. Benchmark Report 2021, https://influencermarketinghub.com/influencer-marketing-benchmark-report-2021/ [accessed on 02.06.2023].

13. Jungnickel, Katrin: Interdisziplinäre Meinungsführerforschung. Eine systematische Literaturanalyse, Springer VS, Wiesbaden 2017.

14. Katz, Elihu / Lazarsfeld, Paul Felix: Personal Influence. The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communication, The Free Press, Glencoe 1955.

15. Kneidinger-Müller, Bernadette: „Identitätsbildung in sozialen Medien", in: Schmidt, Jan-Hinrik / Taddicken, Monika: Handbuch Soziale Medien, Springer, Wiesbaden 2017, pp. 61–80.

16. Krotz, Friedrich: Die Mediatisierung des kommunikativen Handelns. Der Wandel von Alltag und sozialen Beziehungen, Kultur und Gesellschaft durch die Medien, Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen 2001.

17. Lazarsfeld, Paul Felix / Berelson, Bernard / Gaudet, Hazel: The People's Choice. How the Voter Makes up his Mind in a Presidential Campaign, (Duelle, Sloan and Pearce), Columbia University Press, New York 1949.

18. Leißner, Laura / Stehr, Paula / Rössler, Patrick / Döringer, Esther / Morsbach, Melissa / Simon, Linda: „Parasoziale Meinungsführerschaft. Beeinflussung durch Medienpersonen im Rahmen parasozialer Beziehungen: Theoretische Konzeption und erste empirische Befunde", in: Publizistik, vol. 59, no. 3/2014, pp. 247–267.

19. Luhmann, Niklas: Vertrauen. Ein Mechanismus der Reduktion sozialer Komplexität, Enke Verlag, Stuttgart 1968, p. 57.

20. Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth: Persönlichkeitsstärke. Ein neuer Maßstab zur Bestimmung von Zielgruppenpotenzialen, Spiegel Verlag, Hamburg 1983.

21. Rogers, Everett M.: Diffusion of Innovations, 5th ed., Free Press, New York et. al 2003.

22. Schach, Annika: „Vom Two-Step-Flow bis Influencer Relations. Die Entwicklung der Kommunikation mit Meinungsführern", in: Schach, Annika / Lommatzsch, Timo (eds.): Influencer Relations. Marketing und PR mit digitalen Meinungsführern, Springer Gabler, Wiesbaden 2018, pp. 3–22.

23. Sofsky, Wolfgang / Paris, Rainer: Figurationen sozialer Macht, Leske + Budrich, Opladen 1991.

24. Weber, Max: Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 1972.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Prof. Dr. Biljana Chavkoska

is professor at the Integrated Business Institute in Skopje and is teaching courses in the field of International Business Law. During her 17 years of academic work she has published several books, more than 50 articles home and abroad and has participated in many international conferences including at Harvard Law School, Columbia University, University in Glasgow, University of Valetta, Lumsa University, and many others. Her major expertise is in the field of EU Law, Labor Law, gender equality and nondiscrimination.

bcavkoska@yahoo.com

Изворна научна статија
УДК: 305-055.2:32(4-672ЕУ)
305-055.2:32(497.7)

Biljana Chavkoska

FROM QUOTA SYSTEM TO INCREASED GENDER EQUALITY IN EU AND REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

POLITICAL THOUGHT
67

INTRODUCTION

Gender Equality was made part of international human rights law by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948. That milestone document in the history of human rights recognized that "*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights*" and that "*everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, birth or other status*." In 1979, the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which is often described as an International Bill of Rights for Women. In its 30 articles, the Convention explicitly defines discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. The Convention targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations, and it is the first human rights treaty to affirm the reproductive rights of women. [1]

Gender equality has been on the EU Agenda since the founding years. The realization of the principle of equal pay for equal work between man and woman is the first legal article for gender equality in the European Union. Basically, when this article was applied it was not clear if it means only equal work or work of equal value. Amsterdam Treaty and the new article 141, secondary law and the case study of the European Court of Justice affirmed the thesis that not only the equal work but also the work of equal values is covered. The Maastricht Treaty introduces a new Article 13, which is a step forward in the fight against discrimination at the level of the European Union. The community is empowered to take action to prevent discrimination on a whole new list of grounds. Thus, in addition to the prohibition of discrimination based on sex, Article 13 covers racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age, disability and sexual orientation. The consensus for the inclusion of these new grounds is based on the previous experience of the Union in the fight to prevent gender discrimination. Member States have confirmed that equal treatment and respect for diversity are in the interest of society as a whole in order to create an integrated approach to preventing discrimination. The ECJ judgments have supranational character and are obligatory for the EU institutions and for the Member States, such as the legal and physical persons. This is very important for the Candidate countries in order to implement the principle of equality and to increase the living standards of the woman in the area of employment. The EU law and the ECJ case study in gender equality is analyzed as positive and affirmative way in advocating human rights and gender equality.

1 https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

For many years gender equality was not high on the agenda of the Government of Republic of North Macedonia. When the country signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement with European Union and became a candidate country for membership it meant that legal changes are inevitable and raised the question of gender equality in practice. Signing of the agreement meant that Republic of North Macedonia will have to implement the EU gender equality regulations and directives in the national law by adopting and amending the existing laws. Following the candidate country obligations towards gender equality, Republic of North Macedonia adopted the Law on equal opportunities between women and men in 2006 and amended the same law in 2014.[2] Recently, the Ministry for labor and social affair prepared new law for gender equality but it is still not adopted. In 2020 new Law for prevention and protection from discrimination was adopted.[3] In compliance with the Law on Equal Opportunities between men and women in 2020, an intersectional group was established as consultative and advisory group with "gender coordinators" placed in ministries and at the level of local self-government. The new proposal on the Parliamentary Commission for gender equality for increasing the quota in the new Election Code from 40 to 50% was not approved in the Parliament. It can be concluded that many years after signing the agreement with European Union, Republic of North Macedonia improved the equality law and the principle of nondiscrimination in order to approximate the national law with EU law requirements.

In order to achieve equality the countries may use affirmative actions to tackle discrimination. Affirmative action is defined as a set of procedures designed to eliminate unlawful discrimination among applicants, remedy the results of such prior discrimination, and prevent such discrimination in the future. Applicants may be seeking admission to an educational program or looking for professional employment. In modern American jurisprudence, it typically imposes remedies against discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, and national origin.[4] The nature of affirmative-action policies varies from region to region and exists on a spectrum from a hard quota to merely targeting encouragement for increased participation. Some countries use a quota system, reserving a certain percentage of government jobs, political positions, and school vacancies for members of a certain group; an example of this is the reservation system in India.

2 Official Gazette No. 6/2012, Republic of North Macedonia

3 Official Gazette No. 258/2020, Republic of North Macedonia. This law put out of force the old law adopted in 2010

4 https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/affirmative_action

In European Union, the positive actions must be taken in accordance with the principle of proportionality, which means that they are necessary in overcoming the disadvantages in practice only when there are no alternative measures, less harmful to the interests of the other individuals that are seized. The positive actions are complementary with the approach to the inclusion of the gender perspective in all policies and activities of the Union or the so called gender mainstreaming. [5] The article further analyzes the benefits of using affirmative action particularly quotas in increasing the women participation in political elections. The author will analyze the results of the past parliamentary elections after the country independence in 1991 to prove that quota system increased the gender equality. The major question is to analyze how the gender equality was changed with the implementing of the quota system in political life through statistics and legal changes. The conclusions of the paper goes in line with the fact that without deliberation and introduction of quotas as equality tool the women will still face gender discrimination and marginalization in political representation not just in Republic of North Macedonia but also throughout the Member States of the European Union. Achieving equality is one of the preconditions for entering European Union so all the candidate countries should adopt hard and soft law to implement it in practice.

EUROPEAN UNION AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMAN

The European Union since the beginning adopted important primary and secondary law for gender equality. The European Court of Justice played very important role for promoting gender equality and equal opportunities among all EU citizens. The European Commission adopted the Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025, which promotes equality as one of the values of the Union. 2022 was the second year of its application and the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic which showed that there are deep-rooted stereotypical behaviors in the member states.[6]

Despite the encouraging progress in some of the member states of the Union, men still outnumber women, especially in politics, parliaments and governments. From 2004 onwards, with the introduction of legal quotas, the representation of women increased from 17.3 to 34.9 percent. It is estimated that member states with legal quotas will

5 The approach of the EU vis a vis MK for implementing the gender equality in the area of employment, Biljana Chavkoska, Political thought, June, 2008, No. 42, стр. 83-87

6 EIGE, Gender Equality Index 2021 – Health, 2021. Available at https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-index-2021-health

achieve gender equality in 5 years until 2026 and countries without such measures in two decades until 2038.[7]

Regarding the report of the equality between women and men issued by the European Commission[8] the composition of political assemblies and executives at all territorial levels still too often fails to reflect the gender diversity of the population they represent, with women significantly under-represented in many Member States. States and political parties in the EU have introduced a wide array of instruments, including legislative and voluntary quotas and other measures, to promote equal opportunities for women and men in politics. However, the general lack of long-term strategies and the lack of push for change from political parties and governments in many countries undoubtedly explain the slow progress on women's representation. In November 2018, only 6 of the 28 national parliaments across the EU were led by a woman (21.4 %). On average, parliament members in the EU comprised 69.8 % men and 30.2 % women. Although the proportion of women is at an all-time high, still seven out of ten members of national parliaments in the EU are men. At the same time, there is considerable variation between countries. Parliaments in Sweden, Finland and Spain have at least 40 % of each gender, while women account for less than 1 in 5 members. The proportion of female members of the single/lower houses of EU national parliaments increased by 8.1 percentage points between 2004 and 2018 at an average rate of just 0.58 percentage point per year.[9]

There are more men than women in all EU Member State national parliaments. When it comes to the members of national governments of Member States, the shares of women range from higher in Finland (54.5 %), Austria (52.9 %), Sweden (52.2 %), France (51.2 %) and Belgium (50 %), to very low shares in Greece (11.3 %) and Malta (7.7 %). Five Member States – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany and Lithuania – have female prime ministers. Estonia and Greece have female president.[10]

A number of countries have launched initiatives to improve the gender balance in their parliaments. Legislative candidate quotas are currently in place in nine Member States: Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Poland, Portugal, and Slovenia. With the exception of Croatia, the representation of women has improved when comparing the situation before and after application of the quota. However, only Portugal and

7 European Commission, 2022, Report on gender equality between women and men in EU, European Union 2022

8 European Commission, 2019 Report on gender equality between women and men in EU, European Union 2019

9 EIGE Gender Statistics Database

10 Women in politics in the EU: State of play , Briefing, drafted by Rosamund Shreeves, Martina Prpic, European Parliamentary Research Service, European Parliament, 2019, full text available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/689345/EPRS_BRI(2021)689345_EN.pdf

Spain have seen the quota target translated into an equivalent (or almost) proportion of elected members. In all other cases, the quota are still to be reached: the proportion of women among elected members is still below the candidate quota. [11]

Such quotas are currently in place in eleven Member States. The use of gender-balanced candidate lists does not necessarily translate into gender-balanced electoral results. To date, the proportion of elected women members matched (or exceeded) the quota target only in Portugal and Spain. As of January 2021, 22 of the 27 EU Member States had a man as head of government, the exceptions being Estonia, Denmark, Germany, Finland and Lithuania. Only eight other Member States have had a woman prime minister since 2004; the remaining sixteen have only had men in this role. Out of the 21 Member States that have elected heads of state, only three (Estonia, Greece and Slovakia) have women as presidents.

Promoting equality in decision-making is necessary to translate candidate quota into election outcomes, for example ensuring that sanctions for noncompliance with quota are strong enough and enforceable, that women are placed fairly in lists (e.g. using the zipper system), and that they are represented equally in winnable seats.

To improve transparency and democratic accountability, Regulation 2018/673 amending the Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations[12] encourages the inclusion of information on gender balance in relation to each of the member parties of the European political party. For reasons of transparency and in order to strengthen the scrutiny and the democratic accountability of European political parties and the link between European civil society and the Union institutions, and in particular the European Parliament, access to funding from the general budget of the European Union should be made conditional upon the EU member parties publishing, in a clearly visible and user-friendly manner, the political programme and logo of the European political party concerned.[13] The Preamble of the Regulation is not mandatory it just gives directions for further improvements.

In November 2018, 25 out of 28 EU Member States had a male prime minister, the exceptions being Germany, Romania and the UK. Moreover, men accounted for the large majority (69.5 %) of senior ministers with women holding only 30.5 % of

11 Ibid

12 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/673 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 May 2018 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations, Official Journal of EU, OJ L 114I 4.5.2018 p.1-6

13 Ibid, recital 6 of the Preamble

these positions. Governments were gender balanced (at least 40 % of each gender) in Sweden, France, Germany, and Denmark. In Spain, there was a clear majority of women in government (61.1 %). However, in all other countries, most senior ministers (more than 60 %) are men. Most strikingly, women accounted for just 7.1 % of cabinet members in Hungary. Political parties are seen as the gatekeepers of the equal representation of women and men on the political scene since they set party policy and select the candidates for election. In 2018, fewer than one in five (18.4 %) leaders of major political parties across the EU were women and only one in three deputy leaders (33.8 %) was female. In November 2021, the combined members of single or lower houses of national parliaments in Member States comprised 66.8% men and 33.2% women. The proportion of women members represents an all-time high, but still two out of every three members are men. The countries with legislated quotas will achieve gender balance (i.e. at least 40% of each gender) in 5 years (2026). The no action group will take closer to two decades (2038).[14]

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND QUOTA SYSTEM IN REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Gender equality is one of the fundamental values of the Constitution of Republic of North Macedonia. To achieve gender equality and equal opportunities for men and women, the Republic of North Macedonia has adopted legal acts to implement the constitutionally guaranteed right to equality. The Republic of North Macedonia is a signatory to a large number of international agreements that regulate the right to equality and human rights, such as ratification of the UN's Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), including its Optional Protocol, UN's Beijing Platform for Action, Council of Europe's Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and ratification of the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. [15]

Regarding the political area, representation of the women was very low comparing to the man in the Macedonian parliament and government. In the first post-transition general election in 1990, five women (four percent) were elected to parliament (out of 120 representatives) so 96 percent of the candidates were men. In the second

14 Report on gender equality in the EU, European Union, 2022, available at https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/0f-b69c07-e79d-11ec-a534-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-search

15 A mixed picture for gender equality in the context of the 2021 local elections, Support to Electoral reforms, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, 2021 available at https://electoralreforms.mk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/ENG-Study-on-womens-participation-in-political-processes-in-North-Macedonia.pdf

democratic parliamentary elections, in 1994, four women were elected to parliament (out of 120 representatives). With three percent female representation in parliament, Republic of North Macedonia was placed at the bottom of the list of European countries in terms of women's participation in politics.[16] Macedonian women's lobby stressed that they want to be treated the same as men without any special measures and started to take actions more seriously about what they could do to change the situation. For the first time in 1998, parliament adopted a Declaration aimed at increasing the participation of women and supporting special measures. The declaration resulted from the shameful participation of women in the Parliament at less than 5%, which put Macedonia at the bottom of the list in Europe at that time. Following the declaration, special measures were adopted, first with the introduction of obligatory 30% quota for women members of parliament in 2002. The introduction of the quota for women was clearly a sign and a consequence of women's growing political influence.[17]

A vigorous campaign to support quotas in the election law focused on political party leaders and was strengthened by the participation of women within political parties. The law was approved by the Parliament on 25 June, 2002. The law is very clear: those political parties that do not meet the 30 percent criterion will not be registered for elections. The penalty, therefore, is that the party will not have an opportunity to take any seats in parliament.[18] As a result, 18.3 percent of women were elected to parliament in 2002. By contrast, in 1990, 1994 and 1998, 4.1 percent, 3.3 percent and 6.6 percent of women, respectively, were elected. The increase can be attributed to use of the proportional electoral system, the introduction on quotas and the enormous amount of work done by the women's movement to increase gender equality.

With the amendments to the Electoral Code, a legal provision was adopted for securing at least one seat of every three on the candidate electoral lists to belong to the less represented sex. Thus, in 2006, 37 parliament delegates were women elected in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia or 30, 8%. This statistics shows that with the introducing of the quota system the number of women deputies in the parliament increased from 4% in 1990 up to 30%. in 2006. [19]

16 Quotas: The case of Macedonia, Daniela Dimitrievska, IDEA, 2004, available at https://www.agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/agora-documents/macedonia_quota_project.pdf

17 Women in politics: Path to public office and impact at the local level in Macedonia , REAKTOR, 2015 available at https://civicamobilitas.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ZHenite-vo-politikata_EN2.pdf

18 Quotas: The case of Macedonia, Daniela Dimitrievska, IDEA, 2004, available at https://www.agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/agora-documents/macedonia_quota_project.pdf

19 https://www.sobranie.mk/for-the-club.nspx

Pursuant to the Electoral Code, a quota of 40% participation in the candidate lists of the less represented sex was introduced, for candidates for Members of Parliament and for members of councils of the municipalities and the City of Skopje. This means that for every three positions, at least one must be for the under-represented sex and at least one additional position for every ten. The number of women in the political and public life has increased during the reporting period. Specifically, in the 2014 parliamentary elections, 43 female members of Parliament were elected. In the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, there were two female ministers, five female state secretaries, and five female presidents of parliamentary commissions. Furthermore, in the parliamentary elections in 2016 there were 41 women MPs elected, out of 120 MPs in total.[20] In this MP mandate, the deputy Speaker of Parliament is a woman, five women are presidents of parliamentary commissions and seven are deputy presidents of parliamentary commissions. There are four female ministers in the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. In the local elections in 2017, out of 260 candidates for mayors, only 15 were women candidates, of whom 6 were elected mayors (Tetovo, Bitola, Staro Nagorichane, Mogila, Makedonska Kamenica, and Arachinovo). Out of 1388 councillors in local self-government units, 415 women were elected councillors. In the personnel structure of the Ministry of Defense, the percentage of employed women – administrative clerks is 40%. There are 8.85% women in the staffing structure of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia, of whom: 13.73% are officers, 11.13% are non-commissioned officers, 3.60 % are professional soldiers and 52.8% are civil staff. [21]

Quotas have been proven to be efficient. The Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance notes that most of the countries that have achieved the critical mass have an electoral system based on proportional representation and some form of quota system to proactively reduce the obstacles to women entering politics at the national level. Namely 32 of the 39 nations that have achieved 30% women's' representation in national parliaments have some kind of quota measures in place. On the other hand, 38 countries that are at the bottom of the list (with less than 10% participation of women in national parliaments) do not have any kind of special measures to support women participation. It should be noted, that even when they exist, special measures are limited to national parliaments and it has also been pointed out that it is very

20 Observation of the presidential election in North Macedonia 21 April and 5 May 2019, Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau, Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe, available at https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=27699&lang=en

21 List of issues and questions in relation to the sixth periodical report of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, June 2018, p. 11

difficult to apply quotas in systems where parties nominate one candidate (so called single winner systems).[22]

CONCLUSIONS

In the last report on gender equality published by the European Commission it is concluded that the Member States and political parties in the EU have introduced a wide array of instruments, including legislative and voluntary quotas and other measures, to promote equal opportunities for women and men in politics. However, the general lack of long-term strategies and the lack of push for change from political parties and governments in many countries undoubtedly explain the slow progress on women's representation. The European Commission, working towards achieving the sustainable development goals, has been prominently including gender equality in EU political positions and dialogues with partner countries. A number of countries have launched initiatives to improve the gender balance in their parliaments. Legislative candidate quotas are currently in place in nine Member States: Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Poland, Portugal, and Slovenia. With the exception of Croatia, the representation of women has improved when comparing the situation before and after application of the quota. In Republic of North Macedonia the participation of women in politics was very low in the first years after the independence. A vigorous campaign to support quotas in the election law focused on political party leaders and was strengthened by the participation of women within political parties. The law was approved by the Parliament in 2002 and since then the representation of the women deputies in the Macedonian Parliament had increased. Following the candidate country obligations towards gender equality, Republic of North Macedonia also adopted the Law on equal opportunities between women and men in 2006 and amended the same law in 2014.[23] Recently, the Ministry for labor and social affair prepared new law for gender equality but it is still not adopted. In 2020 new Law for prevention and protection from discrimination was adopted.

The using of the quota in the case of Republic of North Macedonia proved that the quotas are very important tool of deliberation for achieving factual equality. Therefore, the quotas need to be obligatory and enforceable to generate tangible results. Quotas have resulted in political parties paying more attention to their women members.

22 A mixed picture for gender equality in the context of the 2021 local elections, Support to Electoral reforms, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, 2021 available at https://electoralreforms.mk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/ENG-Study-on-womens-participation-in-political-processes-in-North-Macedonia.pdf

23 Official Gazette No. 6/2012, Republic of North Macedonia

Even women from rural areas are being listed as candidates. All of this would not have possible if women from political parties, from NGOs, from trade unions, from the media and elsewhere had not worked together to exert pressure to adopt quotas to ensure women's rightful place in decision-making. The conclusions of the paper goes in line with the fact that without deliberation and introduction of quotas as equality tool the women will still face gender discrimination and marginalization in political representation not just in Republic of North Macedonia but also throughout the Member States of the European Union. Achieving equality is one of the preconditions for entering European Union so all the candidate countries should adopt hard and soft law to implement it in practice.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Brindusa Marian, The dualist and monist theories. International laws comprehension of these theories, available at http://revcurentjur.ro/arhiva/attachments_200712/recjurid071_22F.pdf
2. Biljana Kotevska, Executive Summary Country Report Macedonia (FYR) 2012 on measures to combat discrimination, European network of legal experts in non-discrimination
3. Biljana Chavkoska, The approach of the EU vis a vis MK for implementing the gender equality in the area of employment, Political thought, June, 2008, No. 42, стр. 83-87
4. Constitution of Republic of North Macedonia, available at http://sobranie.mk/en/default-en.asp?ItemID=9F7452BF44EE814B8DB897C1858B71FF/
5. European Commission, 2019 Report on gender equality between women and men in EU, publisher European Union 2019
6. European Commission, Report on gender equality between women and men in EU, 2021 publisher European Union 2021
7. EIGE Gender Statistics Database
8. Law on equal opportunities between men and women, Official Gazette No.6/2012 and Law amending the Law on equal opportunities between men and women, Official Gazette No. 166/2014
9. Law on preventing and protecting from discrimination, Official Gazette No.258/2020
10. Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/673 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 May 2018 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations, Official Journal of EU, OJ L 114I 4.5.2018
11. https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/MKD/INT_CEDAW_STA_MKD_32920_E.pdf
12. https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/
13. https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/affirmative_action

14. Women in politics in the EU: State of play , Briefing, drafted by Rosamund Shreeves, Martina Prpic, European Parliamentary Research Service, European Parliament, 2019, full text available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/689345/EPRS_BRI(2021)689345_EN.pdf

15. Report on gender equality in the EU, European Union,2022 https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/0fb69c07-e79d-11ec-a534-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-search

16. A mixed picture for gender equality in the context of the 2021 local elections, Support to Electoral reforms, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, 2021 available at https://electoralreforms.mk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/ENG-Study-on-womens-participation-in-political-processes-in-North-Macedonia.pdf

17. Women in politics: Path to public office and impact at the local level in Macedonia , REAKTOR, 2015 available at https://civicamobilitas.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ZHenite-vo-politikata_EN2.pdf

18. Quotas: The case of Macedonia, Daniela Dimitrievska, IDEA, 2004, available at https://www.agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/agora-documents/macedonia_quota_project.pdf