

# Anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament

*A study of the argumentation of Front National and Vlaams Belang in the immigration debates, and their possibilities to affect the immigration policies of the European Parliament*

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# Summary

Since the 1980s there has been a rise in the number of parties that are hostile towards immigration. At the same time, the number of immigrants arriving in Europe has increased. The European Parliament has now a great deal of power in the legislative process of the European Union, and the increase in the number of anti-immigration parties has also reached this institution. The thesis has studied *how* and *what* two anti-immigration parties, the French Front National and the Belgian Vlaams Belang, argue in the immigration debate in the Sixth European Parliament. The argumentation has been categorized, studied, and compared. The thesis concludes that the representatives from the two parties argue much in the same way and for the same stance in the immigration debate. However, the analysis shows that there are some differences between the argumentation of the two parties. Front National are, for example, more concerned with the member states' right to national self-determination, and to end the Schengen Agreement and the open borders. Vlaams Belang, on the other side, are also negative to the Schengen Agreement, but the thesis finds that the representatives are less negative than the representatives from Front National. The two parties both want to stop the immigration to Europe, and they are negative to legislation that will raise the number of immigrants in Europe, such as the European Blue Card.

The thesis has a second part concerning the possibilities these parties have to directly affect the immigration policies of the European Parliament. As Front National and Vlaams Belang were only members of a political group in a short period of the sixth European Parliamentary term, the thesis finds that there are several shortcomings in their possibilities to have any real direct impact.





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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction of the theme

During the 1980s and the 1990s the countries of Europe were changing and they developed to become more ethnically heterogeneous (Art 2011:3). At the same time, there has been a rise both in the number of parties hostile to immigration, so called anti-immigration parties or extreme right parties, and in their support. The characteristics of some of these parties such as nationalism, xenophobia, nativism and authoritarianism are by many seen as a threat to the multicultural and democratic features of the Western European societies. Merkl and Weinberg claim “a host of extreme right-wing phenomena... are on the march all over Europe” (2003:3). This is not the first time in history that we are witnessing an increase like this, and some call this the third (von Beyme 1988:11, Mudde 1995:203) and fourth wave (Jupskås 2012:85) of post-war right-wing extremism.

What lies in these statements about the increase in the number of anti-immigration parties, and what effect do they have on Europe? There has been an increase in the number of anti-immigration parties in European elections and governments. Further, this trend is also affecting the European Union and the European Parliament, as anti-immigration parties have been directly elected into the Parliament. The European Parliament, with its increasing power in the legislative process of the European Union, is a powerful institution. With the increase in the number of anti-immigration parties in Europe in general and in the European Parliament in special, these parties, at least in theory, could have a great impact on the European politics.

According to David Art, anti-immigration parties have been “influencing how European states and societies negotiate the issues that immigration has introduced” and they have affected the public debates about immigration and other questions related to this (Art 2011:9). He further argues that such parties, even in countries where they are not in government, have been able to “set the agenda on issues such as asylum, immigration quotas, integration requirements, and citizenships laws” (ibid.).

Because of the effect these parties have had, it is interesting to study if they are able to have the same effect in the European Parliament and on the policies of the European Union. This is especially interesting, as the reader will see further on, since the relevance of immigration as a policy issue in the European Parliament and in the Union is increasing. I agree with David Art when he says “the study of the radical right is important for understanding broader trends in contemporary politics” (Art 2011:8).

In this thesis I will study the European Parliament in the search for a clearer picture of anti-immigration parties in this particular institution, which have hitherto not been subjected to particularly intense scrutiny by social scientists. This thesis will therefore be an explorative study. The main focus will be on the field of immigration, an important issue for such parties where they clearly distinguish themselves from more moderate parties. The thesis has two parts. In the first part I will look at how two anti-immigration parties promote their politics and how they argue in the field of immigration in the sixth European Parliament, from 2004 to 2009. In the second part I will study the possibilities the European Parliament gives the two parties to affect its politics and what possibilities the parties utilize. With this thesis I wish to bring out in the open how these parties operate when elected into the European Parliament. The two parties chosen is the French Front National and the Belgian Vlaams Belang and the research question is:

*Front National and Vlaams Belang in the European Parliament’s immigration debates; what possibilities do they have, what possibilities do they utilize, and how do they argue?*

## **1.2 My definition of anti-immigration parties**

The term ‘anti-immigration parties’ refers to parties at the right wing of the political left-right spectre. There exist many other descriptions for such parties, such as the extreme right, right wing populist (Art 2011:10), radical right-wing populism, national populism, new populism (Mudde 2000:13), neo-fascist and neo-Nazi (Mammone et al. 2012:1). All these terms are what van Spanje refers to as terms “based on party ideology” (van Spanje 2011:297).

According to Mudde, most of the definitions using the term ‘populism’ have in common that it is claimed that “populism is primarily used to describe a specific political form or style

instead of a specific ideology”, or to make a distinction between old and more modern parties “of the extreme right” (Mudde 2000:13). He further finds that most of the definitions using ‘populism’ are not that different from the ones using the term ‘right-wing extremism’ (ibid.). Scholars such as van der Burg, Fennema, Tillie and van Spanje (see van der Brug et al. 2000, van der Brug and Fennema 2003, and van Spanje 2010 and 2011) use the term anti-immigration on these parties, which is what van Spanje refers to as descriptions based on policy (van Spanje 2011:293). Van Spanje defines anti-immigration parties as a party that requires measures that “aim to restrict immigration” and that stresses “the urgency of taking measures regarding immigration” (van Spanje 2011:308). This definition can also be used on parties that cannot be placed under any of the other terms mentioned above, such as the Norwegian Fremskrittspartiet. This suggests that parties that can be described as extreme right are a subcategory of anti-immigration parties. All extreme right (or any of the other mentioned descriptions) are anti-immigrant, but not all anti-immigrant parties are ‘extreme’. However, both Front National and Vlaams Belang are usually described both as anti-immigration parties and extreme right parties. Because of this I will use literature that refers to other terms than anti-immigration parties, but relates to the same category of political parties.

Despite that both parties I will study can be placed in the subcategory ‘extreme right’, this thesis will use the term anti-immigration parties, and there are several reasons for this. First, this thesis is concerned about the anti-immigration politics that these parties hold and not the other features typical for ‘extreme right’ parties. A second, and an even more important reason, is that any of the other mentioned descriptions, and especially ‘extreme right’ have both a normative and a descriptive effect. Further, few of the mentioned parties will admit being an extreme right party, as Philip Claeys from Vlaams Belang explains “I too voted against the resolution on extremism. This is not because I feel that the term concerns me – the reverse is true” (European Parliament 2007). However, they cannot deny that they are anti-immigration parties. Lastly, there is not consensus in the literature on which parties that could be placed under any of the other descriptions mentioned above. When the term anti-immigration party is used in this thesis, it is therefore referring to parties that also could be described as extreme right.

## **1.3 Why is this relevant?**

### **1.3.1 The European Parliament**

There are two main reasons why it is relevant to study the anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament. First, the European Parliament has great legislative power. Second, for many anti-immigration parties, the European Parliament is the only parliament where they are able to get representatives and to have a chance to affect the actual policy outcomes. The members of the European Parliament are representatives from each member state and they are directly elected. From the 27 member states in the European Union, it is elected together 754 representatives to the Parliament. The numbers of representatives from each country are proportional with the country's population size (European Parliament n.d B).

There are seven institutions in the European Union, all mentioned in the treaty of the European Union. The Parliament is one of the institutions that are responsible for making policies proposals and making decisions. The power of the Parliament has increased from what it had in the beginning, and today it has legislative power together with the European Council. The Commission proposes a legislative text, which the right committee in the Parliament handle before the parliament votes on the amendment of the law. However, in some cases such as with taxation, the parliament has only a consultative role (European Parliament n.d A). As this shows, the Parliament has a great amount of power in the European Union, at least formally. This implies that the representatives from anti-immigration parties could, as members of the European Parliament, have an impact on the European Union legislative process and the legislation.

### **1.3.2 The relevance of anti-immigration parties**

There are several reasons for why it is relevant to study anti-immigration parties. As the theory chapter will show, many of these parties have features that distinguishes them from other more moderate parties. It is also relevant to study these parties because it is a party group that has been growing in size since the 1980s in many Western European countries. The following is an overview to demonstrate this development.

In the election to the European Parliament in 1984, Front National received over 11 percent of the votes, and in the French presidential election in 1988, Le Pen received 14,4 percent in the first round. In the French presidential election in 1995 Le Pen received 15,1 percent in the



first round while in 2002 he got 17 percent of the votes (Schain 2006:274). In 1991, Vlaams Blok (the predecessor of Vlaams Belang) received 10,3 percent of the Flemish votes, and in June 2004, in the Flemish region, the party received 24,2 percent (Coffe, Heyndels, Vermeir 2007:143). There has also been an increase in the popular support for such parties in other countries than France and Belgium. In Austria, Jörg Haiders Freiheitliche Partei Österreich received one fourth of all votes in the 1999 election. Together with the other party on the right, the Österreichische Volkspartei, the Freiheitliche Partei Österreich formed a government in February 2000 (Jupskås 2012:85-86). This resulted in negative reactions from both inside and outside the country.

This is not the only example of anti-immigration parties holding positions in governments in Europe. In 2002 in the Netherlands, Pim Fortuyns List was created close up to the date of election and Fortuyn wanted a “more open democratic process, more liberal economy and a stricter immigration policies” (Heidar et al. 2008:164, my translation). The party achieved 17 percent of the votes (Heidar et al.: 2008:164-165, van Holsteyn and Irwin 2003:42) and gained 26 seats of the total 150 in the “Second Chamber of Parliament” (Holsteyn and Irwin 2003:42). As a result the party was invited into the Dutch government (Heidar et al.: 2008:164-165) with the Christian Democratic Appeal and the People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy. The party experienced the death of Pim Fortuyn, it was marked by power struggle, and the coalition lasted only about three months (Jupskås 2012:89-90). Pim Fortuyns List was not the only anti-immigration that were invited to cooperate in the government in the Netherlands, but the next party that had the chance to do that had a different agreement with the other government parties. The cooperation between the government parties and the Partij voor de Vrijheid was more informal, as Partij voor de Vrijheid worked as a permanent support for the government parties in the parliament without having any ministers or ministries (Jupskås 2012:90).

The same was the case in Denmark, where Dansk Folkeparti supported the government parties (Venstre and Det Konservative Folkeparti) in the parliament (Jupskås 2012:89). The cooperation in Denmark lasted until the right side lost power in 2011, whereas the cooperation in the Netherlands lasted about six months before Hero Brinkman resigned from Partij voor de Vrijheid, and the government parties lost their majority in the parliament. It then took about one month before Wilders decided to end the cooperation with the government parties (Jupskås 2012:89-91). Also Switzerland has had representatives from

parties that could be characterized as ‘anti-immigration’ in the government (Jupskås 2012:91). The Schweizerische Volkspartei used to be a conservative party (Kriesi et al. 2006:936) with support mostly from the “Protestant German speaking Switzerland” and with many farmers as voters (Heidar et al. 2008:198, my translation). In the 1990s the party developed to be an anti-immigration party, defending the “Swiss identity”, “the Swiss values” and a strict asylum and immigration policy (Heidar et al.: 2008:198, my translation). According to Skenderovic, seven anti-immigration parties (what he refers to as ‘radical right-wing populist parties’) developed in Switzerland between the 1960s and the 2000s. In Western Europe, Switzerland is the country that has had the highest numbers of representatives from such parties elected into the national parliament (Skenderovic 2012:209).

### **1.3.3 Immigration as a policy issue**

There are several reasons why it is relevant to study immigration as a policy issue. First, there has been an increase in the immigration to and within Europe since the late 1980s and early 1990s. As mentioned earlier, immigration has changed countries from being homogenous to being countries with a large immigrant population (Art 2011:9). Further, the immigration after the Cold War was no longer only coming from the south, but now also from the east (Bade 2004:339). Second, The European Union, which now contains 27 member states, has tried to develop a common immigration policy for the member states that will affect much of the immigration to and within Europe. Since the 1960s and 1970s immigration has developed to be an issue of “public concern” for Europe and one speak of an “Europeanization of migration policy” during the 1980s (Huysmans 2000:754-755), the same time as Europe experienced an increase in the level of “immigration of refugees and asylum seekers from the third World” (Bade 2004:345). Hix and Høyland find that in the last decade the immigration issue has been “one of the most active areas of EU-policy making” (Hix and Høyland 2011:285).

### **1.3.4 Reactions from the other countries and representatives**

In addition to the reasons already given, it is interesting to look at anti-immigration parties in the Parliament because the rest of the representatives in the European Parliament have been negative to their representation. In 1994, Gianfranco Fini's party National Alliance were invited into the government of Silvio Berlusconi. The other member states reacted with criticism, but nothing more. However, when the anti-immigration party Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs was one of the coalition partners in the new government in Austria in February 2000 the reaction from the other member states was quite different from the Italian case. The 14 states that were members of the European Union at that time imposed sanctions on Austria (Merklingen et al. 2001:60, Lubbers et al. 2002:345, Startin 2010:432, Fieschi 2000:526, Art 2011:8). The other member states would have no "bilateral contacts at the political level with the new government, Austrian ambassadors in EU capitals would be received only at a technical level and there would be no support for Austrian candidates for positions in international organizations" (Merklingen et al. 2001:60).

The reason the member states gave for the sanctions was that the new government in Austria did not correspond to the "fundamental values of the EU" and a concern with human rights (ibid.: 64, Fieschi 2000:526). The member state felt that the ideology of the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs and in special its leader Jörg Haider, was opposed to "the ideas which defines who they were as a group" (Merklingen et al. 2001:65). This implies that there were ideological and identity reasons behind the sanctions. There was however no juridical basis for this, which could explain why there were 14 bilateral sanctions and not a collective sanction from the European Union (ibid.:67). However, the researchers find self- interest to also be a part of the reasoning behind the sanctions. The members of the European Union feared the growth of anti-immigration parties in their home countries, and this was specially the case with the countries that had challenges at home with such parties (ibid. 74, Fieschi 2000:528). The sanctions were lifted on September 12, 2000 (Leconte 2005:640).

## 1.4 Outline

On order to better to understand the parties in question and the history of anti-immigration parties, **chapter two** is a historical overview of the anti-immigrant parties in Europe after the Second World War. The reader will find a short introduction to the three so-called waves of far right, including an introduction to the last and current wave. Following is a literature review and an overview of the latest research on anti-immigration parties in general. **Chapter three** explains the method of idea- and ideology analysis used in this thesis. In **chapter four** there is a more lengthy overview of the European Parliament, the organization, the powers, the legislative procedure and the theory of second-order elections. This is to show the importance of the European Parliament in the policies of the European Union, and to see the possibilities the two parties have to affect this. Further, the chapter gives an overview of previous research on anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament. Here the reader will see that there have not been many studies of this or on their argumentation in the immigration debate. The reader will also find expectations for the analysis results. **Chapter five** is the chapter of Front National, a short history of the party and the representatives' arguments in the Sixth European Parliament. **Chapter six** is about Vlaams Belang, the history, and their arguments in the Sixth European Parliament. **In chapter seven** the results are presented. The last chapter, **chapter eight**, concludes and recaps what was done in the analysis and discussed in the master thesis, and recommends steps for future research on anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament.

## **2 Literature review and theoretical framework**

### **2.1 History and development of anti-immigration parties – four waves?**

” By the turn of the twenty-first century, it had become clear that many of these parties... were here to stay” (Art 2011:2).

The rise of parties at the far right in Western Europe after the Second World War has been coming in waves. While some authors such as von Beyme (1988) and Epstein (1996) find that these waves are “similar in all or at least most of the countries”, other authors such as Veen (1997) find that the different waves are “for the largest part country specific” (as cited in Mudde 2000:5). As the reader now will see, immigration was not that an important issue for parties on the far right until the period that is called the third wave of post-war right-wing extremism. This is natural when one looks at the immigration during the first and second wave, which was a whole other situation than from the 1980s and the situation today. A short introduction of the two first waves will be given, as it is relevant for the later development of anti-immigration parties.

#### **2.1.1 First and second wave of far right parties in Western Europe**

The first wave of far right in Western Europe after the Second World War was affected by the recently ended Second World War and by fascism. It was strongest in countries such as Italy and Germany (von Beyme 1988:8), but also countries as Greece, Spain and Portugal were effected by the far right. These countries were governed by undemocratic regimes with “more or less clear” ties to the right side until the midst 1970s (Jupskås 2012:57). In the democratization process in Italy after Dictator Mussolini was killed, a new Italian constitution was created, based on a “strong anti-fascist consensus” (ibid.:58). Fascism was still strong in Italy after the war, both “in ideological sense and as a consequence of tight personal and economic relations between Mussolini’s many supporters” (ibid.). Since 1953, the fascist party Movimento Sociale Italiano managed to mobilized “most of the potential

voters on the far right” (ibid.). The party had in the period up to 1972, between 24 and 56 seats in the national assembly, and was “the only extreme right party that had a permanent seat in any European parliament after the war“ (Jupskås 2012:59, my translation). The new constitution did have a regulation prohibiting the establishment of or ‘reorganisation’ of new fascist parties. For some reason this regulation was never used against the Movimento Sociale Italiano (von Beyme 1988:9, Jupskås 2012:59).

The situation in West Germany after the war was different from that in Italy, and West German authorities had powerful tools against any forms of “re-organizing of the far right” (Jupskås 2012:59). First, there was a 5 percent threshold to be able to be member of the government (Westle and Niedermayer 1992:84, Roberts 1992:328). Second, the new constitution included “a provision for anti-democratic parties to be dissolved by the Constitutional court” (Roberts 1992:328). Further, the Nazi regime’s bureaucratic elite was integrated into the new bureaucracy (Jupskås 2012:60). Both the powerful tools and the integration into bureaucracy were effective in “hindering a recruitment to competing political alternatives” (Jupskås 2012:60). Despite this, several far right parties tried to make it, but were stopped by the ban of anti-democratic parties. One party made its way, the Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands. However, it never reached the same size as the Movimento Sociale Italiano and it never made it to the Bundestag (German national assembly) (Roberts 1992:330). The Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands was different from the Movimento Sociale Italiano in that it did adapt to the political system at the time, and the party could therefore be said to be subscribing to a “parliamentary fascism” (von Beyme 1988:4).

The second wave started (for the most part) in the 1970s (Jupskås 2012:62) and was “conditioned by new waves of social deprivation” (von Beyme 1988:10). It was characterized with tax protests, and the movement Union de Défense des Commerçants et Artisans started in the 1950s and became a national movement in France, with focus on critic of “the tax level, the bureaucracy and the central government in Paris” (Jupskås 2012:62-63). Pierre Poujade became the front figure of the movement, and the term Poujadisme was used to describe the movement. In 1956, the movement stood for election and achieved 11,6 percent of the votes under the name of Union et Fraternité Français (Union and Brotherhood of France, UFF). As a result the movement now had 52 seats in the Assemblée nationale (the French National Assembly) (Shields 2007:72). This was also the beginning for the man who

years later will be leading the largest French party on the far right, Front National, as Jean-Marie Le Pen were now a representative for the Union et Fraternité Français in the French Parliament (Jupskås 2012:64). This was the only time the Union et Fraternité Français was elected into the parliament. One of the reasons for this could be that the electoral system in France changed from proportional representation to “two-ballot majority plurality” in 1958 (Lijphart 1985:6), a system that makes it harder for small parties to be represented. Von Beyme makes the following conclusions about the situation in France: “with Poujadism in France, the tax revolt and the anti-welfare state movement found an organisation before the welfare state had been fully developed” (von Beyme 1988:10).

The tax protest movement was also visible in other European states, and in countries such as the Netherlands and Finland, the agrarian protest movement was growing. Here the movement focused on small-scale owners that tried to stop the state interfering and the change to large-scale farming (Jupskås 2012:65). Also in Norway and Denmark did tax protest parties manage to grow (ibid.:68).

### **2.1.2 The third wave of post-war far right parties – anti-immigration**

The third wave distinguishes it self from the former two waves in several ways. First, it covered more of Europe in regards to number of states affected and there were more and larger parties involved. Further, the parties from this wave had more success electorally than parties from the first and second wave (Mudde 2000:6). Second, the politics of the parties of the third wave were different. From the early 1990s parties that “railed against immigration and the political establishment” had made their way into politics in Western Europe (Art 2011:2). While the second wave was characterized by tax protest, the third wave was characterized by “immigration scepticism, asylum resistance and demands for assimilation” of the new citizens (Jupskås 2012:75). Von Beyme finds that “a third phase of right-wing extremism was caused by unemployment and xenophobia” (von Beyme 1988:11). From 1985-1990 the “average support” for anti-immigration parties in Europe increased from about 2 to about 7 percent (Jupskås 2012:79). Because of this shift in policies towards a more immigration hostile one, the parties from the third wave will be referred to as anti-immigration parties.

Most of the authors describing the character of anti-immigration parties tries to find some common features, and some authors mention many features and some only a few. For example, Husbands (1981) use only xenophobia to describe the characteristic of these parties (as mentioned in Mudde 1995:205). When searching for a definition of what he refers to as the 1980s 'extreme right parties', Mudde found 58 different features taken from 26 different definitions (Mudde 2000:11). In his research, he founds that five characteristics were "mentioned, in one form or another, by at least half of the authors" (Mudde 2000:11). These five characteristics are: nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy and a strong state (Mudde 1995:206, Mudde 2000:11). Even though it is argued above that extreme right is a type of anti-immigration parties, the characteristics of extreme right would be discussed, as there is a consensus amongst scholars that both Front National and Vlaams Belang are extreme right parties. The following is a short introduction to these five features.

The first feature mentioned by Mudde is nationalism. He describes this as "a political doctrine that proclaims the congruence of the political unit, the state, and the cultural unit, the nation" (Mudde 1995:209). Jupskås also finds that nationalism is important for these parties, and he specifies it to be 'ethnic nationalism'. While liberalism focus on the individual, anti-immigration parties focus on the ethnic nation. According to Jupskås, for these parties, the nation is more an ethnic cultural community than a political community, and a goal is for the nation state to be ethnic homogenous. This results in the fact that many of these parties do not "accept that people with other ethnicity gain the same rights as the ethnic majority" (Jupskås 2012:42, my translation).

According to Mudde, a second feature of these parties is racism. The classic definition of racism is "the belief in natural and hereditary differences between races, with the central belief that one race is superior to the others" (Mudde 1995:211). Mudde also distinguishes between old and new racism, and while the 'old racism' focus on the "superiority of the 'home group'", 'new racism' focuses more on the "incompatibility of other groups" (ibid.). Further, the 'old racism' distinguishes people on only their race, while the 'new racism' distinguishes people on the basis of their culture (ibid.). Jupskås supports this by claiming that one of the features of the anti-immigration parties is that they have a 'cultural racism', where other cultures are inferior and not races (Jupskås 2012:45).



A third feature that Mudde finds is typical for anti-immigration parties are xenophobia which means, literally, “fear of strangers” in Greek. In the literature xenophobia are described broader, and more a “fear, hate or hostility” towards “ethnic foreigners” (Mudde 1995:212). Jupskås also finds this feature in the anti-immigration parties, and arguing that many fear “other ethnic groups... will lead to the destruction of the nation” (Jupskås 2012:45, my translation). He also finds that it is not just other cultures they fear, but also other foreign elements and ideas, such as feminism and homosexuality and other groups such as “Jews, Gypsies, Muslims... and minorities” (ibid.:46). The fear is based on the idea that these ideas or groups will “pollute an otherwise clean nation state” (ibid.).

A fourth feature Mudde finds is that these parties can be characterized as “anti-democratic” (Mudde 1995:214). Jupskås agrees to this arguing there are two main reasons for this. First, they want only their own ethnic group to have any “political influence” and second, that only the ones with the “right insight should govern” (Jupskås 2012:43). The fifth feature mentioned by Mudde is that these parties want a strong state, and Jupskås also mentions this feature. One of the several features of a strong state is the focus on law and order (Mudde 1995:216) and on punishment for people committing crimes (Jupskås 2012:44).

Jupskås mentions a sixth feature that is not mentioned by Mudde; conspiracy theorists. A conspiracy theorist challenges “the official version of what has happened” (Jupskås 2012:47). Two examples of conspiracies some representatives from these parties do believe are the denial of Holocaust and the islamification of the European culture initiated by the elite (ibid.:48). Jamin mentions in his definition of what he describes as ‘extreme right’ that one of the characteristics of these parties is that they are radical, in the sense that they want to “address the ‘root’ (radix) of the phenomenon it perceives as the problem” and their solutions to what they see as problems is often extreme to “give shape to nationalism” (Jamin 2012:63).

### **2.1.3 The fourth wave and their ideology**

In the fourth wave, the features from the third wave are still applicable, but the criticism is mostly directed against Muslims and Jupskås summarizes the four waves in regards to immigration is this way (my translation):

If the first wave of mobilizing on the far right was sceptical to immigrants and Jews, parts of the second wave focused on the immigrant's threat against the welfare state. In the third wave, the economic critique of immigrants was supplied with a cultural dimension. They were not only a threat against the societies' economic sustainability, but they were also a threat against "our values". In the fourth wave the critiques is more specific: it is mainly Muslims who make up "the other" (Jupskås 2012:96).

According to Art, these parties are of the opinion that if we blend different ethnic groups, it will lead to problems that are insuperable and that immigration should be "dramatically reduced or even reversed" (Art 2011:11). According to Lipset "status anxieties is crucial to the rise of fascist parties, and many authors state that post industrialisation "has created a reservoir of modernization losers" who sufferers from the status anxieties, which in fact Lipset says is a reason for why fascist parties grow (as mentioned in Art 2011:12). While other authors bring in Ingleharts idea of post materialist values and state that these values has created a "backlash or a silent counterrevolution among people that do not agree with the ideology of the people on the left side of the political scale" (Art 2011:12). Art argues that "massive increase in immigrant population and asylum seekers contributed to both these trends; immigrants increased the sense of insecurity among the so-called modernization losers" (ibid.).

According to Rydgren (2008), what he refers to as 'radical right-wing parties' have four reasons for arguing that immigrants are a problem. The first reason is that immigrants are seen as a threat to the "ethno-national identity" (Rydgren 2008:746). Second, they see immigrants as being "a major cause of criminality and social unrest", and third that they are a "cause of unemployment" (ibid.). The fourth reason for why these parties see immigrants as a problem is that they are, according to the 'radical right-wing parties', "abusers of the welfare state" (ibid.).

## **2.2 Literature review – anti-immigration parties in general**

There is no lack of scholars and studies debating and covering anti-immigration parties in Western Europe since the 1980s. This section is an introduction to some of the latest research on the field. As the reader will see most of the existing literature focus on who votes and why for anti-immigration parties, and why some anti-immigration parties succeed while others do not. As this section will show, there is less literature on these parties in the European Parliament. An overview of the literature that exists will be given in chapter 4.2.

Several authors have studied anti-immigration parties at the “micro level” and have thereby identified characteristics of the “radical right electorate” (Art 2011:13). Givens finds that men are more likely to vote for anti-immigration parties than women, and blue-collar workers are more likely to vote for these parties than people working in other sectors (Givens 2004:50). The results from Arzheimer and Carter also support this, finding that being a young man working in manual labour increases the probability of voting for an anti-immigration party. They also find that people with “middle school levels of education” were more likely to vote for these parties (Arzheimer and Carter 2006:438-439).

Other scholars have tried to explain why some anti-immigration parties become a success and have studied the effect of their ideology and sociostructural variables. Eatwell categorises these arguments as ‘demand-side’ arguments, which is “socioeconomic developments” such as the level of immigration and unemployment (Eatwell 2003:48). First, Eatwell mentions the ‘protest thesis’, claiming that “such parties lack any serious ideology and that their programme amounts to little more than a negative attack on the political establishment” (Eatwell 2003:51). Van der Brug, Fennema and Tillie find in their study of European elections in 1994 that anti-immigration parties do not attract more protest votes than other parties do. Further, they find that “the strongest determinants of voting for anti-immigrant parties are a combination of ideological (left/right) proximity and (antagonistic) attitudes towards immigrants” (van der Brug et al. 2000:94). In 2003 Fennema and van der Brug replicate this study by using data from 1999, and the results are confirmed for Freiheitliche Partei Österreich, Alleanza Nazionale, Dansk Folkeparti and Vlaams Blok. However, they are not confirmed for Lega Nord, the Centrumdemocraten, Fremstridspartiet, French Front

National, the Republikaner and the Wallonian Front National. For these parties the authors conclude that protest voting “play a role” (van der Brug and Fennema 2003:68-69).

Second, Eatwell mentions the single-issue thesis, which according to him is the “most common demand-side approach” (Eatwell 2003:49). Further, he argues that “the single-issue approach implies that extreme right parties will do especially well at times when there are major concerns about new immigration” (ibid.) However, he finds several shortcomings with this theory, one being that anti-immigration parties often have a broader political program than just immigration. The second shortcoming is that the success of these parties does not “necessarily follow new waves of immigration” (ibid.:50). A third and fourth theory in the same vein is the ‘social breakdown thesis’ and the ‘economic interest theses’. The first holds that “traditional social structures, especially those based on class and religion, are breaking down” and the second “trying to associate economic interest with extremist voting” (ibid.:52,56).

According to Art, there is no consensus between scholars that have studied the relationship between different “sociostructural variables” and “cross-national variation in the radical right’s electoral performances (Art 2011:13). He finds that some of the authors do find a positive correlation between the level of unemployment and the votes for anti-immigration parties, while others find a negative correlation (ibid.). Lubbers et al. conclude that “Between-country differences related to the social-structural composition of the population hardly explained any cross-national differences in voting for” anti-immigration parties (Lubbers et al. 2002:370-371). They also find that it is often claimed that the level of support for anti-immigration parties is higher in areas where more immigrants live, but that there is proven several places that this is not the case (ibid.). However, some authors find a connection between the numbers of votes for anti-immigration parties and “high levels of immigration”, while others again find no such link (Art 2011:13). Lubbers et al. find that “the number of non-European Union citizens did affect levels of “ anti-immigration voting “in a country” (Lubbers et al. 2002:371). Norris, on the other hand, finds that the “support for the radical right at national level is unrelated to any of the available aggregate indicators of ethnic diversity” in the countries studied (Norris 2005:172). According to Art, these differences in the results can in some ways be explained by differences in how the research has been done. However, he also finds that more recent literature on anti-immigration parties has rejected the proposition that “demand-side variables...provide sufficient explanations for

cross-national variation” and he concludes that “while demand side factors – particularly immigration – appear to be necessary for the rise of the radical right, they are certainly not sufficient for electoral success” (Art 2011:13).

There have also been studies looking at the correlation between the type of electoral system and the seats and votes that anti-immigration parties win. The general idea is that electoral systems with high election threshold make it more difficult for small parties, such as the anti-immigration parties, to achieve votes and to win seats. This is, as the reader will see in the chapter 4.1.3, one of the reasons why some small parties, such as anti-immigration parties, can achieve more votes in the European Parliament than in national elections with other electoral procedures. According to Art, the two electoral systems one imagines would make the greatest difference is the system of single-member district and proportional representation. He finds from several studies, however, that there is not any statistically correlation between the electoral system and the share of votes to anti-immigration parties in *national* elections (Art 2011:16). Norris has a whole book on anti-immigration parties and the “electoral market” and concludes, “the share of the vote achieved by radical right parties in the most recent national legislative elections was similar under majoritarian (7.2 %) and proportional (7.1 %) electoral systems” (Norris 2005:112). Carter’s results also support this (Carter 2005:158).

Much of the existing literature focuses on the situation in each country and studies them individually. In his book from 2000, Cas Mudde has first an introduction to the “extreme right party family” before he studies Germany, Flanders and the Netherlands in greater detail (Mudde 2000). Merkl and Weinberg also divide their book into chapters about the national context, and write about the situation in France, the Netherlands, Germany and Russia (Merkl and Weinberg 2003). In the book edited by Mammone, Godin and Jenkins, most of the book is divided in chapters about the regional and national situation for anti-immigrant parties (Mammone et al. 2012). Ignazi’s book from 2003 looks at the anti-immigration parties in Italy, Germany, France, Austria, Belgium, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Great Britain and the Mediterranean countries, one country or area at the time (Ignazi 2003).

To sum up this chapter, it is a conceptual disagreement in the political science on how the phenomenon “anti-immigration” parties should be defined and described, but there is a core of parties that scholars can agree to as part of the phenomenon. These core parties have

features such as nationalism, cultural racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy and a strong state. The cultural racism results in a negative view on immigration, and immigrants are seen as, not just a threat to the European identity, but also as a cause of criminality and unemployment. There is a disagreement in the literature of why some of these parties have been a success and others have not. While some find a correlation between the level of unemployment and the level of immigrants, and the share of votes for these parties, others do not. However, the authors seem to agree on the electorate of these parties.

# 3 Method

## 3.1 Research design and methodology

### 3.1.1 Research design

Gerring defines a case as a “spatially delimited phenomenon (a unit) observed at a single point in time or over some period of time” (Gerring 2007:19). He further says that “each case may provide a single observation or multiple (within-case) observations” and that “a case may be created out of any phenomenon so long as it has identifiable boundaries and compromises the primary object of an inference” (ibid.). Further, cases are used in a *case study*. A case study can be defined as Gerring does, as an “intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is – at least in part – to shed light on a larger class of cases” (a population) (Gerring 2007:20). Another, but quite similar, definition is from George and Bennet who describe a case study as “the detailed examination of an aspect of a historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be generalizable to other events” (George and Bennet 2005:5).

When selecting the cases to study, it is important to choose cases that enable you to answer the research question. The first thing I did was to choose which parliamentary term to study. To be able to do an in-depth study within in the time-span of this thesis there had to be a restriction in the analysed time period, and the parliamentary terms is a good way to define time periods. As I am particularly interested in the development over the past years, I wanted to choose a time period close to today. Second, I wanted to study a parliamentary term where there were many parties and representatives from anti-immigration parties. Further, I wanted to study a parliamentary term where immigration was an important and central issue. I have chosen to study the Sixth Parliamentary term from 2004 to 2009. This is a term where immigration was a much-discussed issue, much due to the demographic and economic challenge that Europe experienced at this time. Second, as the reader will see later on, there were several important developments in the immigration policy of the European Union from 2004 to 2009. It was also in this period that we saw the latest attempt to form a political group of anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament, the group *Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty*.

The next step was to find parties to study. As the theory chapter shows, there have been several anti-immigrant parties in the European Parliament. To get the full picture of these parties in the European Parliament, ideally I would have looked at every party that falls within the category of anti-immigration in the chosen parliamentary term. However, due to the limited time and space available there must be some refinements in the analysis sample. I decided to look at only two parties because this gives me the chance to get a more in-depth analysis of how these two parties argue in the immigration debate. It also gave me the chance to compare the two parties. I wanted to study two parties from the same part of Europe, Western Europe, because I find this most relevant in the parliamentary term I chose.

The two parties I have chosen to study are Front National and Vlaams Belang. In the sixth parliamentary term the representatives from Front National were Bruno Gollnisch, Carl Lang, Jean-Marie Le Pen, Marine Le Pen, Fernand Le Rachinel, Jean-Claude Martinez and Lydia Schenardi. The representatives from Vlaams Belang were Philip Claeys, Koenraad Dillen and Frank Vanhecke. The two parties are similar in that they both can be characterized as anti-immigration parties. According to Swyngedouw and Ivaldi they are in the same class of parties that could be characterised as racist (2001:2). I have chosen these parties for several reasons. First of all, they were the two largest parties in the chosen parliamentary term, with respectively seven and three representatives. Both Front National and Vlaams Belang have been able to get significant “popular support” at the polls, and they have been both able to create party organisations (Swyngedouw and Ivaldi 2001:2). Front National achieved 9,81 percent of the votes in the 2004 European election and Vlaams Belang achieved the total of 14,34 percent (Minkenberg and Perrineau 2007:35). Vlaams Belang had increased with 4,94 percent from the election in 1999, and Front National did increase its share of votes with 4,12 percent in the same period (ibid.:26). The other anti-immigration parties closest to this result was Dansk Folkeparti with 6,8 percent and Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs with 6,3 percent (ibid.).

There are also some differences between the two parties. They have different histories, and because of this they capture some of the width of the anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament. While France has a long history of parties at the far right, Vlaams Belang grew out from nationalistic and separatist movement in Belgium. Third, the two parties represents one large and one small country, France had 65 436 552 inhabitants in 2011 and Belgium had 11 008 000 the same year. This means that the two chosen parties



further captures the differences between the anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament.

In general, case studies have a challenge when it comes to representativeness, because “it includes, by definition, only a small number of cases of some more general phenomenon” (Gerring 2007:43). A consequence of this is that “case study research is generally weaker with respect to external validity than cross-case” (ibid.). This means that I will not be able to generalize my results from the analysis of argumentation in the immigration debate to other anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament. However, this is not what I am aiming for. My aim is first and foremost to study the two parties, and therefore weaker external validity is not that much of a problem. If the goal was to study anti-immigration parties in general the weakened external validity could be discussed as an issue. Further, what case study as a research design lack in external validity, it takes back in regards to internal validity, as it will have a better chance than cross-case studies to establish causal relationships (ibid.).

As case study is a research design, and not just a method, one can use the case study research design with different methods. The following chapter is a review of the method used in this thesis.

### **3.1.2 Research method**

I chose to use text analysis because this is a good method to study how the two parties argue in debates about immigration. This method made me able to study the text I have used and to find what arguments they are using in the debate about the subject. Within the method of text analysis, there exist several different types. One type is the content analysis. Krippendorff defines content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (Krippendorff 1980:21). Which means that that this method scores higher in verifiability and external validity than, for example, content *idea* analysis. He further says that the task of a content analysis is to “make inferences from data to certain aspects of their context” (ibid.:27). Carley argue that content analysis “enables quantitative analysis of large numbers of texts in terms of what words or concepts are actually used or implied in the text” (Carley 1993:77). Since this is a quantitative method, the focus is on counting words or concepts and to interpret them in their context. This method would have,

as implied by Krippendorff, made the results score higher on external reliability because it is easier to replicate and test for other researchers.

I could have used content analysis, and looked at the frequency the representatives use the word immigration or immigrants. By using this method, I would not have been able to study how the representatives argue. I could have counted how many times the different arguments were used, which could have given an indication of how important the representatives think the issue is and if they argue the same thing repeatedly. However, the debates and speeches in plenary is, as explain further down, limited to what is the theme of the debate. The representatives do not have the ability, in most of the data used, to speak of what they feel is most important, but only to give their opinion on the topic discussed or voted on. This means that the content analysis would not have given me the answers to my research question.

Another type of text analysis that could have been used to answer my research question is idea- and ideology analysis. Bergström and Boréus argue that idea- and ideology analysis can be used when one is studying “ideological aspects of a debate” and that these methods can be used to analyse which ideas “that is subject of parties” (Bergström and Boreus 2005:177). In their article, the authors mention that there exist different kinds of idea- and ideology analysis, but they also mention that here is not a well-known classification of the different kinds (ibid.:155). The first type they mention is to study ideas in general, in for example debates or in a political area. This method could have been used if the goal of this thesis was to look at the immigration as a policy field in general in the European Parliament. The next type they mention is to look at a group or actor perspective and often to study the changes over a time period. This could have been used if the goal was to study the changes in the policies of the two parties in regards to immigration over a given time period. A third type is what they call “functional idea analysis”, and this method looks at both the effect of the ideas and the uprising. (ibid.:156). This method is not useful to answer my research question because it is not concerned with the uprising or background of the ideas that the two parties have regarding immigration. Critical ideology analysis is a fourth type the authors are mentioning. In this method the goal is divided between understanding the text as it is and to find the underlying level and place the text in a context (ibid.:158). With this method I would not have been able to answer my research question, as there is no part of my research question to look at a deeper level than the text itself.

A fifth method they mention is to look “for the logic in a political ideological argumentation”. As an example of a research question they mention, “ how does party X argue in the policies of welfare?” (Bergström and Boréus 2005:155). This is precisely the kind of research question that this master thesis has. According to them, the goal of this method is to “present maximum clearness to what was said in a debate” (ibid.). As it is the researchers job to find out what was really said in a debate, there is a need for interpretation of the text. And this again will affect the possibility of verifiability and the level of external reliability, and other researchers might not find the same results as I did.

Now as the method is cleared, it is time to look at the data used. To answer how the two parties argue in the immigration debate in the European Parliament, there are a limited number of documents to use. In the parliamentary term chosen, the speeches and other form of oral presentation in the European Parliament is documented in text from the webpage of the Parliament. From this webpage<sup>1</sup> one can find a list of all the representatives from the chosen parliamentary term and their activities. On the page for each representative, one can find information about the representative’s membership in political groups, committees and delegations. Further, on this page one finds questions, motions for resolutions, speeches in plenary, written declarations and an attendance list. The type of documents that will be used is mostly what falls under the category of “speeches in plenary”, which is explanation of votes in the Parliament, speeches and speeches in debates. The speeches are given in oral, but written down afterwards. These documents are chosen because, as explained later, this is the method that the representatives have to express their views in the Parliament. This is especially so for the period when the representatives from Front National and Vlaams Belang were not part of any political group, which were most of the sixth parliamentary term. By going through these documents, one is able to see how the representatives from the two parties argue in the discussions of immigration, how they express themselves and what they focus on in regards to the different themes being discussed.

After finding the page for the representative, I have gone through every document found under questions, motions for resolutions, speeches in plenary and written declarations. In every document I have searched for the keyword “immigra”. With this keyword I found

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<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parlArchives/mepArch/term6.do;jsessionid=31B625152FEA88D6AE92E9A013D48A55.nod e1?language=EN>

every document that contains the words immigration, immigrants, migration and migrants. As the focus of this research is immigration, it is self-evident why this keyword is chosen. However, the choice did limit the scope of documents available, as only documents where “immigration, immigrant, migration and migrant” is mentioned will be part of the analysis. After going through the documents, I found that the representatives from Vlaams Belang often use the term “aliens” to describe immigrants. In cases where both terms are used, the study will cover the documents. Hence, documents that only use the term “aliens” will not be part of the analysis. However, despite this I think that the arguments of Front National and Vlaams Belang arguments in regards to immigration are well covered because I find that these pitfalls only would have a minor effect on the results. I cannot see how a few documents that speak of aliens but not immigrants could have a great impact on the results. When going through the documents and searching for the keyword I found the following numbers of documents.

#### Front National:

The number and types of documents found with the keyword is varying between the representatives. While Bruno Gollnisch is the one with the highest number of explanation of votes/speeches in plenary, 309, I found that 57 of them contain my keyword. Carl Lang has 150 speeches/debates/explanation of votes and 66 of them contain the keyword, and five out of the 13 parliamentary questions. Jean-Marie Le Pen has been the least active of the representatives in this period and in the immigration debate in the sixth parliament, and he has only 27 explanations of votes/speeches in plenary and 12 contain the keyword. Marine Le Pen has also been less active than the other representatives, and has 34 speeches in plenary/explanation of votes and nine that contains the keyword. A reason for why Jean-Marie and Marine Le Pen have been less active could be that they both have party responsibilities in France, as they are the party leaders. Fernand Le Rachinel has 69 speeches in plenary/explanation of votes and I found the keyword in 17 of them. Jean-Claude Martinez has 17 parliamentary questions and one contains the keyword, while he has 133 speeches in plenary/explanation of votes and I found the keyword in 10. The last representative, Lydia Schenardi, has 56 documents and five that contains my keyword.

#### Vlaams Belang:

The first representative, Philip Claeys, has 202 parliamentary questions and seven of them contain the keyword. He has 183 speeches in plenary/explanation of vote and 45 contain the

keyword. Koenraad Dillen has 149 parliamentary questions and nine contain the keyword and 136 speeches in plenary/explanation of vote and 28 of them contain the keyword. The last representative, Frank Vanhecke, has 375 parliamentary questions and 53 of them contain the keyword. He also has 159 speeches in plenary/explanation of votes and 43 contain the keyword.

The next thing I did after having registered every document that contain the keyword, was to go through every document. By doing this I had the chance to find the documents that was relevant for the analysis and to root out the documents that were not. There were some documents that contained the keyword but were not a part of the immigration debate. This means that the number of relevant document is lower in some cases than what is mentioned above. Documents with representatives from both parties are excluded, while documents by more than one representative from the same parties are taken into consideration. After going through the relevant documents, I noted the topic of the representative's arguments. By doing this, I had an overview over the different themes and arguments given in the discussions about immigration. The text step was to go over the document again and to categorize the different arguments. By categorizing the arguments it was easier to study how they argue and what they argue for. As the arguments were not known in advance, the categories were made after the documents were read and based on my findings. I have afterwards gone trough the documents again to see if the categories really fit the argumentation, and to see whether I have left something out.

There are several aspects that could affect the results of this idea- and ideology analysis. First, I could have missed one document that is relevant. However, as stated above, I did not see how a few missed documents could have affected the analysis results in a relevant matter. Further, I could have misinterpreted the arguments they used. Text analysis involves a great deal of interpretation and there will always be a risk of misinterpretation. Tjora argues that in qualitative research there is no such thing as "complete neutrality" and it is important for the researcher to establish how his own position may affect the research (Tjora 2010:176). To ensure a high level of neutrality, I have added several direct quotes in the analysis, which makes it possible for others to draw their own conclusions and to check the validity of the arguments given in this thesis. An overview of the documents where the direct quotes are taken from are added in the Appendix. However, sometimes the arguments are taken out of their original context, hence, there has to be some level of interpretation. Further, the

arguments discussed in the analysis are extracts from the available documents, which means they are examples of how the two parties argue. It also means that other researcher could have chosen other arguments to study.

	Front National	Vlaams Belang
Asylum	X	X
Demography	X	X
Stop and reverse	X	X
Integration and assimilation	X	X
Situation in third country	X	X
National self-determination	X	X
Illegal employment	X	X
Discrimination	X	X
External borders and FRONTEX <sup>2</sup>	X	X
Internal borders and Schengen <sup>3</sup>	X	X
The Blue Card and Brain drain <sup>4</sup>	X	X
Unemployment	X	X
The Return Directive <sup>5</sup>	X	X
Terrorism	X	X
Economy	X	X
Consequences of immigration	X	X
Freedom of expression		X

Table 1: Categories for the analysis

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<sup>2</sup> FRONTEX is explained in the Appendix

<sup>3</sup> The Schengen Agreement are explained in the Appendix

<sup>4</sup> The European Union Blue Card is explained in the Appendix

<sup>5</sup> The Return Directive is explained in the Appendix

# 4 The European Parliament

## 4.1.1 The European Parliament and the legislative procedure

The European Union is divided in an executive branch (the Council of ministers and the Commission), a judicial branch (the European Court of Justice) and a legislative branch (the European Parliament and the Council) (Hix and Høyland 2011:8,9). The Council of ministers (hereinafter referred to as the Council) is both “a legislative and an executive body” (ibid.). It “adopts EU legislation and the budget”, making it a part of the legislative branch. It also “coordinates the broad economic policy goals of the member states” (ibid.). Further, it concludes the European Unions international agreements, coordinates the common foreign and security policy and the “police and judicial cooperation”. The Council also proposes “reforms to the EU treaties” (ibid.). While it is the Commission that proposes new legislation (Corbett et al. 2011:7), the legislative system is bicameral. The two parts of the legislative branch is the Council and the European Parliament. The Council and the Parliament represent different actors in the Union, as the former represents the member states (represented by ministers of governments) and the latter represents the citizens (represented by political parties) (Hix and Høyland 2011:49). At first, the Council had more power than the Parliament, but the European Parliament has in the last years increased its power in the legislation process. In the Lisbon Treaty (from 2009) co-decision between the two chambers became the general rule of the legislative procedure (ibid., Corbett et al. 2011:5). Before this, three treaties have changed the Parliament’s power. To fully understand the development in the power of the European Parliament and the role it now plays in the legislative process, the following is a short introduction to these changes.

In the Single European Act from 1987, the cooperation procedure was included (Hix and Høyland 2011:53, Peterson and Shackleton 2006:106). This new procedure was applicable to ten articles, however these articles “ included most areas of the single market programme, specific research programmes, certain decisions related to structural funds, and some social and environmental policy issues” (Hix and Høyland 2011:53). According to the cooperation procedure the Parliament has the right to read the position from the Council a second time (Hix and Høyland 2011:53, Corbett et al. 2011:4), and the Parliament could approve it, reject it or “press for amendments” (Corbett et al. 2011:4). In regards to agreements with European states that are not members of the European Union and issues related to the enlargement of

the Union, the Single European Act introduced an assent procedure, which gave the Parliament the right to give its approval before the Council could act on the case (Hix and Høyland 2011:53, Corbett et al. 2011:4, Peterson and Shackleton 2006:106). The second development came with the Maastricht Treaty of 1993. With this treaty the co-decision procedure was established. According to this new rule, when the Council and the Parliament did not come to an agreement after the second reading by the Parliament, a conciliation committee were to be appointed (explained further down) (Hix and Høyland 2011:53, Corbett et al. 2011:4). Further, the decision from this committee had to be approved by the Council and the Parliament. This new procedure was applicable for most of the ten articles that were regulated by the cooperation procedure and other areas that were introduced in the Maastricht Treaty, such as “public health, consumer protection, education and culture” (Hix and Høyland 2011:53). The cooperation procedure from the Single European Act was further developed and was now applicable to most areas were “Council acts by a qualified majority” and the assent procedure were “extended to a wider category of international agreements and a number of other areas” (Corbett et al. 2011:5).

In the third treaty, the Amsterdam Treaty from 1999, the co-decision procedure was further developed (Hix and Høyland 2011:53, Corbett et al. 2011:5) and was now applicable to “most non-agricultural legislation” (Corbett et al. 2011:5). Legislation could now be adopted after both chambers had read it once, if they both agreed to it. The conciliation committee was now the last resort (Hix and Høyland 2011:53). The treaty also stated that the Parliament’s vote for the President of the Commission was “a legally binding one” (Corbett et al. 2011:5). The fourth treaty, the Nice treaty from 2003, broadened the areas regulated by the co-decision procedure, and the Parliament now had the authority to bring the other institutions of the European Union for the European Court of Justice (Corbett et al. 2011:5).

After the Lisbon treaty became effective in 2009, the legislative process was divided into three different procedures. The three different procedures are consultation, consent and ordinary legislative procedure (Hix and Høyland 2011:68). The first, the consultation procedure, is when the Commission makes a proposal and the Parliament gives its opinion of it using simple majority vote. The procedure ends with the Council choosing between rejecting the Parliaments evaluation, adopting it or amending it. In the second, the consent procedure, the Council gives a common position to the proposal from the Commission. The Parliament then gives its acknowledgement from a simple majority vote. However, absolute



majority is needed when it comes to cases regarding new member states and issues relating to the procedures of the European Parliament's elections.

In the third and last procedure, the ordinary procedure of legislation (the co-decision procedure) the Commission gives its proposal to both the Council and the Parliament. The parliament states a common opinion on the proposal decided with a simple majority. Then it is up to the Commission to send a new version to the Council, with the changes from the Parliament. The Council has the final call to either 1) agree to the proposal or to 2) make changes to it. 1) If it agrees to it, then a new law has been made. 2) If it does not agree to it, and makes changes, then the Parliament has the right to get it back for a second reading. In the second reading the Parliament can amend, reject or approve it. 1) If the Parliament does not want to reject or amend it, then a law is made. 2) If the Parliament wants to amend it, then the Commission gives a statement about the amendments and return it to the Council. If the Commission supports the changes made by the Parliament then the Council can adopt the changes with a qualified majority vote. If the changes made by the Parliament are, however, not supported by the Commission, then the Council needs unanimity to adopt the new proposal from the Parliament. If the Council agree to all the changes the Parliament has proposed, then a new law is made. However, if they do not agree, a conciliation committee is made of representatives from all the 27 member states, 27 representatives from the Parliament, the rapporteur and a representative from the Commission. 1) If the Conciliation committee do not get to an agreement, then no new law is made. If 2) the parties do come to an agreement then the Parliament and the Council gets a third reading and vote for it by simple majority vote (Hix and Høyland 2011:68, 69). This process is complicated, and the reader will find an illustration of the process on the following page.

This chapter demonstrates that the European Parliament plays an important role in the legislation process of the European Union. Because of this important role it is relevant to study the anti-immigration parties in this institution. The next sections give an introduction to the elections of representatives, the organization of the European Parliament and methods available for the representatives to ask questions and to argue for their stance in the political debate.

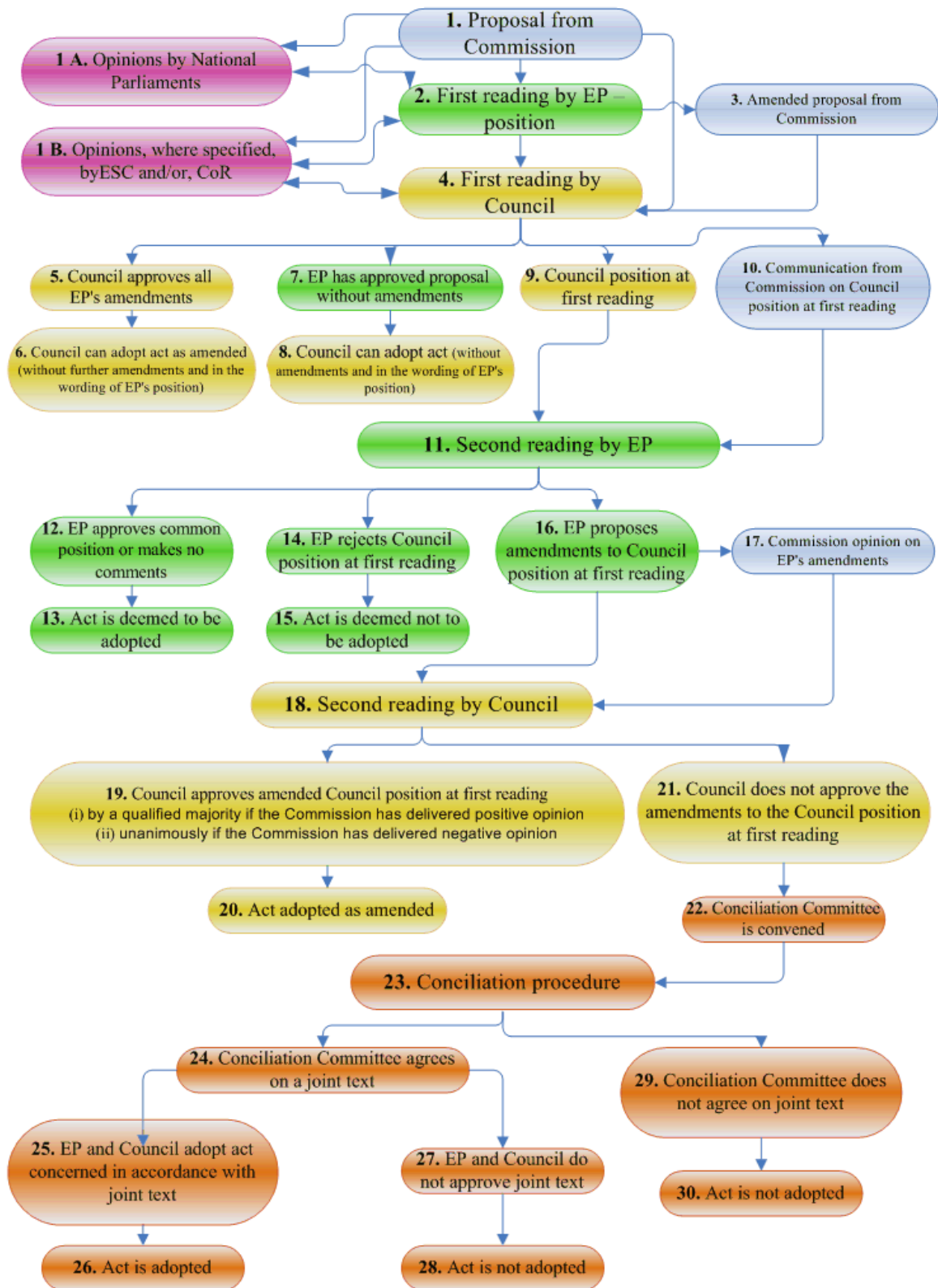


Figure 1. The Co-decision procedure. The actions taken by the commission is marked in blue. The actions taken by the European Parliament is green, and the yellow marks the action taken by the Council. The last part in orange is the consultation procedure (European Commission 2012).

## **Election of the Members of Parliament**

In 1979, the first direct election to the European Parliament was carried out. According to the “Act Concerning the Election of the Representatives of the Assembly by Direct Universal Suffrage”, the elections in the members states shall be executed in a period of four days, from Thursday until Sunday (Corbett et al. 2011:13). In this first election, there was no common legislation that regulated the rules of election, resulting in different rules in the different members states. Further, the European elections do not always follow the same rules and electoral systems as the national elections. This is a reason for, as we will see in chapter 4.1.3, that some parties may have a greater chance to be elected into the European Parliament than into the national parliament. An example of this is France. Here the national assembly is elected by a majority system with two rounds and single member constituencies while the representatives to the European Parliaments is elected by a proportional system with the lowest threshold of 5 percent. In Belgium, Italy, UK and Ireland there were even created new constituencies for the European election (Corbett et al. 2011:14).

The newly elected parliament in 1979 started the (long) process of creating common rules for the election of members to the Parliament. The process resulted in that the Council and the Parliament both agreed in 2002 that a proportional representation system should be the rule (Judge and Earnshaw 2008:69, Corbett et al. 2011:18). This was followed by every member state in the 2004 and 2009 elections. However, there are still differences in the way these elections are carried out in each members state (Judge and Earnshaw 2008:69). Some states have only one constituency while others have numerous, and there are differences in the power of the voter when it comes to party lists, preferential voting and the lowest election threshold. According to the common rules, the highest level of threshold is 5 percent of the total number of votes (Corbett et al. 2011:16-20). From the current 27 member states, 754 members or representatives are elected to the European Parliament in European elections in each member state. The numbers of representatives have changed over the years, and the number of representatives from each country is proportional with the country’s population size. The lowest number of representatives from one member state is six and the highest is 99. Parliamentarians are elected for fixed five-year terms (European Parliament n.d B).

The rules regarding the eligibility of candidates have developed over time. At first, there was a requirement that to be able to be a candidate one had to be from that country. Further, in some member states there were a requirement that the candidate had to be living (domiciled)

in the country of question to be allowed to be a candidate. However, there were some exceptions such as in UK and Italy where candidates from any member state (Italy) or any candidate from the Commonwealth (UK) could stand as a candidate. A Council directive from 1993 states that any citizen from a member country can be a candidate from the country where they live and that the same rules apply to them as for nationals from that country (Corbett et al. 2011:20-21). As of 1993, citizens of the Union had the right to vote in the country where they lived, even if it is not the country where they are from (Corbett et al. 2011:24). When it comes to the age of the candidates, the age limit differs between member states. The lowest age limit is 18 while the highest is 25 (Corbett et al. 2011:20-21), and the minimum age for the right to vote is 18 in every member state but Austria (where it is 16) (Corbett et al. 2011:24). According to a decision from the council in 2002, dual mandate (candidates member of both national parliament and the European Parliament) was no longer an option. There were some exceptions in the 2004-2009 European Parliament, however, from 2009 there were no candidates with such dual mandate (Corbett et al. 2011:23).

#### **4.1.2 Organization of the Parliament**

The three main parts of the legislative branch is the parliamentary leadership, the system of committees and the political groups. The president and 14 vice-presidents are heads of the Parliament. Included in the leadership is also the Bureau of the Parliament. This is a gathering of the president and his vice-presidents and the Bureau works with the “the internal organizational and administrative matters” (Hix and Høyland 2011:56). The Bureau also works with more political issues and they gather in general every week. The next part of the leadership is the Conference of Presidents, which consists of the President and the leaders of the Parliament’s political groups. This group have meetings two times a month and this is traditionally the place where the majority of political issues are handled, especially issues concerning the “relationship between the European Parliament and the Commission and Council” (ibid.). The last part of the Parliament’s leadership is the Conference of Committee Chairs. The Conference “coordinate the committee agendas and tackle inter-committee demarcation disputes” (ibid.).

#### **Committees**

The members of the committees are representative to the different political preferences in the Parliament. However, personal experience, such as former membership of a committee, also

plays a role when members of the Committee are elected. The committees propose “amendments to legislation” in reports (written by Rapporteurs) and draft resolutions (see Figure 1 for illustration). The drafts and the reports are then introduced to a plenary session in the Parliament. The representatives chosen to be a rapporteur are overall proportional to the political groups in the committee, but are not proportional to nationality (Hix and Høyland 2011:58-59).

### **Political groups**

The political groups are a way of “structuring debate and coalition formation in the legislative process” (Hix and Høyland 2011:56). The political groups decide what issues to be discussed in the plenary sessions (European Parliament n.d C), which means they have a great impact on the agenda of the European Parliament. The groups have meetings on several occasions, and they “formulate and articulate common perspectives on the issues before Parliament” (Judge and Earnshaw 2008:123). Hix et al. 2007 (133-1336, as cited in Judge and Earnshaw) find that the members of political groups are “agents of two principals”, both their national party and their political group in the Parliament (Judge and Earnshaw 2008:137). One could therefore imagine that the two agents could have different opinions on different issues brought up in the Parliament. However, research shows that in almost 90 percent of the decisions from the 1999-2004 Parliament that were recorded, the two agents had the same opinion. In cases where the two agents did disagree the members were more likely to vote with the national political party than the political party group (Judge and Earnshaw 2008:137-138). According to the current rules of procedure there must be minimum 25 members from one fourth of the member states to form a political group (European Parliament n.d D). It is also necessary that members of a political group share “political affinities”, to hinder that members join a political group only to get the benefits that follow such groups (Judge and Earnshaw 2008:116). As the reader will see in chapter 4.2, this rule led to the dissolution of the Technical Group of Independence, consisting of members from, amongst other, anti-immigration parties.

Members that are not part of any political group are called non-inscrits (non-attached members). The political groups have certain advantages, such as the right to have a secretariat and economic support (Hix and Høyland 2011:56). In 2007, political groups received 15 percent of the total budget of the Parliament, and the funding included information, administrative and secretariat support and other organizational support (Judge

and Earnshaw 2008:118). The leadership of the political groups determines important issues such as the choice of the parliaments president, the policy position of the group and the agenda of the plenary sessions that the Parliament holds. Further, the political groups determine the “allocations of committee positions and legislative reports (rapporteurships)” (Hix and Høyland 2011:56). This suggests there is much to earn, both economically and politically, to join a political group. Today, the largest groups are The European People’s Party, which is positioned on the centre-right, and the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats positioned on the centre-left. A national party is more likely to reach their policy goals if their representatives are members of any of these two political groups (Hix and Høyland 2011:56).

### **The possibilities for parties to be heard and affecting the agenda**

This section is concerned with the possibilities the representatives in the European Parliament have to promote their politics, to speak in plenary and to test the Commission. Two ways the legislative Parliament can get information from and to see what the executive (Commission and Council) is doing, is by asking questions and arranging debates. With the Treaty of Rome the Parliament was given the right to ask both written and oral questions to one part of the executive; the Commission. The right to question the executive was further expanded in 1973 when the Parliament was given the right also to ask questions to the Council (Corbett et al. 2011:315, Judge and Earnshaw 2008:218). The questions asked by the Parliament to the Commission (be it oral or written) gives the Parliaments a chance to get “precise information on particular points”. It is also a chance for the Parliament to “force a policy statement to be made” (Corbett et al. 2011:315).

The Parliament and its members have three different ways to ask questions to the executive; oral questions, written questions and questions during questions time. The first type of question the Parliament has the right to ask is questions to be answered orally with a following debate. These questions can only be put on the agenda by “a committee, a political group, or at least 40” members (Judge and Earnshaw 2008:218, Corbett et al. 2011:316). Which means no single member can ask this kind of question. When the question is asked, it is then up to the Conference of Presidents to decide both if and when it will be on the Parliament’s agenda. The Council and Commission are given respectively three and one week to answer a question orally (Corbett et al. 2011:316). When the Council and the Commission gives their reply, it is followed by a debate. In this debate, and in other debates

in the Parliament, the speaking time is assigned to the different actors. The speaking time of the Political Groups is divided in two. The first period is shared equally between the groups. The next period is then divided between the groups and the non-attached members, based on their number of members (Corbett et al. 2011:197). In practise, this means that members of the larger groups get more speaking time than members of smaller groups and non-attached members. After the debate, the Parliament (“a political Group, a committee or 40 members”) may want to adopt a new resolution based on the debate (Judge and Earnshaw 2008:218, Corbett et al. 2011:316).

The second type of question is written questions. During a parliamentary term there is usually asked more of these questions than the question type mentioned above. Any Member of Parliament has the right to ask such a question (Corbett et al. 2011:315, Judge and Earnshaw 2008:219). Both questions and the reply from the Commission are archived and available from the Official Journal. Regarding the timeframe of answers to these questions, one differentiates between priority questions and other, non-priority questions. The former type of questions is expected to be answered within three weeks, and the members of Parliament only have the opportunity to ask one question every month. When it comes to the latter, the receiver has six weeks to formulate its reply (Corbett et al. 2011:315-316, Judge and Earnshaw 2008:219). In the sixth Parliament (2004-2009) there were considerable differences in the number of written questions asked by the political groups. In the largest groups (the group of the European People’s Party and European Democrats (EPP-ED), The Party of European Socialist (PES) and Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)), the number of oral questions asked varied between 25 and 35, while with the smaller groups (Independence and Democracy group (Ind/Dem) and European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE-NGL)) it varied between 76 and 87. The greatest amount of questions, however, came from the non-attached members (146 questions) (Corbett et al. 2011:317-318).

The third opportunity for the members of Parliament to question the executive is during the question time. This is a 60-90 minutes session during a plenary session, and there is one such session for each of the executive branches (the Commission and the Council). In the “questions time”, the right to ask questions is not limited to political groups, committees or a great number of members, which means any members of Parliament is given the opportunity to ask questions. If a member wants to ask a question during these sessions, he or she would have to give the question two weeks ahead of the relevant “question time”. Each members of

Parliament are given this right to question the two institutions only once a month, one question to each institution. However, both the member that asked the question and other members are allowed to ask a follow up question after the institution has given its reply (Corbett et al. 2011:316). Another way a simple member of Parliament can “draw Parliament’s attention to any subject” is during the one minute speeches (Corbett et al 2011:195). From 2002 this has been limited to 30 minutes (ibid.).

According to the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, rule number 170, every member of the parliament has the right to “give an oral explanation on the final vote for not longer than one minute or give a written explanation of no more than 200 words, which shall be included in the verbatim report of proceedings” (European Parliament 2013). This gives the representatives a chance to speak in plenary and explain how they think about the subject and why they have voted for or against it. Rule 170 further states that political groups “may give an explanation of vote lasting not more than two minutes” (ibid.). This means that political groups have another possibility to speak in plenary and to explain their vote, and representatives that are members of a political group has a greater chance to explain themselves than representatives that are non-attached. Rule 170 restricts the explanation to the topic that is being voted on by saying “Explanations of vote given either orally or in writing must have a direct bearing on the text being put to the vote” (ibid.). Hence the rule gives representatives a possibility to be heard, however, the speech is limited to the text being voted on.

### **4.1.3 Second-order elections**

Even though the European Parliament has much power in the legislative process and thereby on the policies of the European Union, Reif and Schmitt (1980) define the election for the European Union as a second-order national election. The article came out after the first direct election in 1979. According to the authors, first-order elections are national parliamentary or national presidential elections, while second-order elections include by-elections, municipal elections, regional elections and European elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980:8). Several authors have elaborated this theory of second-order election after Reid and Schmitt.

Two conclusions can be drawn from the concept of European elections as second-order election. First, the European election is second to that of the main elections. Second, that the



European election is a national and not a European contest (Hix and Marsh 2007:496) and that the voters are motivated by “national rather than European concerns” (Weber 2007:510). An example of this is what we saw in chapter 4.1.2, that the representatives votes with the national party when disagreement with the political group in the European Parliament. Further, in first-order elections the government position is at risk, while in second-order elections there is less to lose (Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010:8). Three consequences of this are that parties that stand for election spend less money before the European election. For the voters, the consequences are that they have less incentives to cast a vote and that less people do vote in the European elections compared to the national elections (Hix and Marsh 2007:496, Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010:10). According to the theory of second-order elections the larger parties will lose votes and the smaller parties will gain votes. Further, parties in government will get fewer votes than parties in opposition (Hix and Marsh 2007:496, Reif and Schmitt 1980:9, Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010:9). Some find that the results depend on whether the European election is close to or in between national elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980:10, Hix and Marsh 2007:501). According to Hix and Marsh, extreme parties, both left and right, will get more votes in the second-order election than in a national election (Hix and Marsh 2007:496).

This implies that the European Union could be an arena where anti-immigrant parties have a chance to be elected. First, there is in many cases a different election process. The proportional election makes it easier for smaller parties to be elected into the European Parliament than into national parliaments in countries with plurality elections. This means of course that in countries that have proportional representation elections, the differences in election results may not be that different. Second, since the smaller parties and the opposition parties have a tendency to win over larger parties and parties in government in these second-order elections, this will benefit the anti-immigration parties. Hence, anti-immigration parties that are small, and not even a part of the political landscape nationally can get elected into the European Parliament. The European Parliament is an important institution in it self, but this shows that it is an even more important arena for the anti-immigration parties.

This is also the case for other small parties, such as the Swedish Pirate party who received 7,1 percent of the Swedish votes in the 2009 European Parliament election and only 0,63 percent 2006 national parliamentary election (the Riksdag election) (Erlingsson and Persson 2011:123). From Denmark there have been parties in the European Parliament that does not

even compete in the national elections, such as the June Movement and the People's Movement against the EU. In the first election to the European Parliament in 1979, the People's Movement received 21 percent of the Danish votes (Raunio 2007:195) and in the 1999 election the June Movement and the People's Party together achieved 23 percent of the votes (Ferrara and Weishaupt 2004:302).

## **4.2 Previous research on anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament**

As the literature review shows, there has been done much research on the anti-immigration parties as such, but there is less research to be found on how these parties act when elected into the European Parliament. According to Mudde (2007) the European Parliament is amongst the small number of places where such parties (he calls them populist radical right) "has been able to establish some structured cooperation" (Mudde 2007:177). Further, Mudde finds that the research that has been done remains "the domain of anti-fascists and freelance journalists" and "that there has been next to no systematic confrontation" to what Mudde describes as "their often grotesque misrepresentations of a 'brown network' based largely on bizarre conspiracy theories" (Mudde 2007:158).

Le Pen and the Front National have been trying for the last two decades of the 20th century to form a "Nationalist International". Le Pen had the perception that this movement was necessary to "counter-weight" the "international cosmopolitan movement" (Mudde 2007:174-175). However, according to Mudde, there were more "financial and power motives" behind the attempt to develop an international cooperation. If there were cooperation between populist radical right in different countries, this could lead to a stronger group of such parties in the European Parliament (ibid.:175)

In the book "Political Parties and the European Union" from 1996, Catherine Fieschi, James Shields and Roger Woods have written a chapter titled "Extreme right-wing parties and the European Union: France, Germany and Italy". The authors find that in the middle of the 1980s, parties that could be described as anti-immigration began to "gain ground in parts of the European Community" (Fieschi et al. 1996:235). In 1979, the first direct election to the

European Parliament, only one party on the far right was elected into the Parliament, the Italian Movimento Sociale Italiano. The party was represented with four representatives in the European Parliament. In the next election in 1984, Movimento Sociale Italiano got five and Front National was represented with ten representatives (Startin 2010:433, Fieschi et al. 1996:236). The 15 representatives formed an inter-parliamentary group called the *Group of European Right*<sup>6</sup>. The number of members in the group increased with one after John Taylor from the Ulster Unionist Party joined (Startin 2010:433, Mudde 2007:177). In the 1989 election the number of representatives from anti-immigration parties further increased. The German Die Republikaner got six seats, Front National kept its ten, Movimento Sociale Italiano had four, Italian Lega Lombarda (the main predecessor of Lega Nord (Mudde 2000:8)) had one and Belgian Vlaams Blok had one (Fieschi et al. 1996:236, Fieschi 2000:523). The representatives from Die Republikaner, Lega Lombarda and Vlaams Blok also joined the group<sup>7</sup>. The group were dissolved the same year after a disagreement between Movimento Sociale Italiano and Die Republikaner over the status of South Tyrol region (Startin 2010:433, Fieschi et al. 1996:236).

A new group were formed later the same year, but without the Italian party. The new group, the *Technical Group of the European Right*, consisted of members from Front National, Die Republikaner and the Vlaams Blok. The group was “riddled with conflict and, although it drafted resolutions and continued to exist more or less until 1994, it had more conflict between members of the group than concerted action” (Fieschi 2000:523). According to Mudde, the group was not created on the basis of a similar ideology but on “pragmatic principles”, such as financial motives (Mudde 2000:89). Further, the group did not have access to “normal channels for cooperation between parliamentary groups nor were they given any committee chairs“ (ibid.). The leader of Die Republikaner, Franz Schönhuber, accused both some Parliament members from his own party and the leader of Front National, Jean-Marie Le Pen, of being racist. Franz Schönhuber left the group together with three other representatives from his party (Fieschi et al. 1996:236). In 1994, after the European election, Die Republikaner did not get enough votes to reach the limit of 5 percent. This meant that according to the rules of procedure there were not enough members left in the Technical Group of the European Right to form a political group, and the group was dissolved (Startin

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<sup>6</sup> Together with one representative from the Greek party EPEN, the party of the former Greek dictator Georgios Papadopoulos

<sup>7</sup> EPEN lost its seat

2010:433). In the period from 1994 to 1999 the anti-immigration representatives from France and Belgium were not members of any transnational group, and Startin (2010) finds that there “was little cooperation or formalized dialogue between the various parties during this period” (Startin 2010:433,434).

In the next election, in 1999, the number of anti-immigration representatives increased and Le Pen tried once again to form a group. The one anti-immigration representative from Denmark, Morgans Camre, rather chose to become a member of the group Europe of Nations and the four anti-immigration representatives from Austria did not want to be “associated with the perceived extremism” of Front National and Vlaams Blok and chose to be non-affiliated (ibid.:434). The attempt resulted in the *Technical Group of Independence*, which was a “non-ideologically aligned” group with members from Italian Lega Nord, Movimento Sociale Italiano – Destra Nazionale, Vlaams Blok, the Basque Eusakol Herritarrok party and nine representatives from the “ultra libertarian, anti-statist” Partito Radicale from Italy (ibid.). The group did not last for a long time. In September 1999, the group were dissolved after the Constitutional Affairs Committee meant that the group did not have “any coherent political affinity” (ibid.). Front National and Vlaams Belang<sup>8</sup> continued to cooperate and shared a secretariat. However, there was no further cooperation in the 1999-2004 Parliament (Startin 2010:434, Hartleb 2012:59).

On January 15, 2007, there was another attempt to form a political group of anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament. The group *Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty* was formed after the inclusion of more member states in 2007, however it only lasted a couple of months (Mammone et al. 2012:4, Startin 2010:430). At first there were 20 representatives from seven countries; France (7, Front National), Belgium (3, Vlaams Belang), Austria (1, Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs), Italy (1, Movimento Sociale Italiano and 1, Fiamma Tricolore), United Kingdom (1, independent), Bulgaria (1, Natsionalen Sayuz Ataka) and Romania (5, Partidul România Mare). The group members from Bulgaria and Romania were not yet directly elected into the European Parliament, they were elected by their national governments. In May, the election in Bulgaria gave the Natsionalen Sayuz Ataka two more seats than the one it already had, and the number of the representatives in the group increased to 22. However, the election in Romania in November resulted in no representatives from

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<sup>8</sup> Vlaams Belang was established in 2004, after Vlaams Blok was dissolved the same year.

Romanian Partidul România Mare, as the party got less than the required 5 percent (4,15 percent). This meant that Romania lost its five representatives and the *Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty* no longer met the requirements of minimum 20 members from one-fifth of the members states (Startin 2010:435).

The group *Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty* tried to bring together anti-immigration representatives from both Western and Eastern Europe. The goal of the group was to “fight against the Constitutional Treaty, against tendencies towards centralisation and the rejection of a possible accession of Turkey to the EU, and in favour of the preservation of national identity” (Hartleb 2012:59). Startin (2010) finds from qualitative studies and interviews that Bruno Gollnisch (deputy leader of Front National), the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs representative Andreas Moertz and Philip Claeys from Vlaams Belang played a large role in forming the group. Further, Startin finds after studying statements of the group members made when the group was started, qualitative interviews and the groups declaration, that the reason for why they wanted to create this group could be divided into: a “shared ideological conviction, respectability and legitimization and practical survival/considerations and financial motivations” (Startin 2010:436). (As mentioned above, there are several financial advantages that follow the formation of a political group in the European Parliament).

Even though there was an increase in the number of relevant parties in the 2009 election, there has not been any formal cooperation or groupings in the European Parliament since the *Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty* (Startin 2010:443). This review of the existing literature on the anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament shows that there is limited literature on this topic in general, and I have not been able to find literature that concerns the participation of the anti-immigration parties in the immigration debates in this institution.

## 4.3 Immigration as a policy issue in the European Union

In the last decade, the issues and policies regarding immigration has been “one of the most active areas of EU policy-making” and the European Parliament has played a “major role in shaping these policies” (Hix and Høyland 2011:285). However, there has been a remarkable development when it comes to the issue of immigration in the European Union since the beginning of the 1950s. To be able to put the arguments of the representatives in context, the following is a short introduction of the history of immigration as a policy issue in the European Union.

In the 1950s and early 1960s Western Europe needed more workers and a solution to this was to open up for immigration of workers. However, this need changed and in the late 1960s and the 1970s immigration became “increasingly a subject of public concern” (Huysmans 2000:753-754). With this came a more restrictive immigration policy and the political rhetoric increasing linked “migration to the destabilization of public order” (ibid.), albeit the big rise in the “number of incoming asylum-seekers, refugees and illegal migrants” did not start until the period 1989-1993 (Guiraudon 2000:254). At the Paris Summit in 1973, the European Community decided that the Community should have a “common legislation for foreigners” (Huysmans 2000:755.). Along with the admission of United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark, the interest for immigration issues increased, and in 1974 an action programme “in favour of migrant workers and their families” was set up (ibid.).

During the late 1980s, immigration issues were more “politicized through the question of asylum”, or as Huysmans put it “through the (con)fusion of immigration and asylum” (Huysmans 2000:755). He says that “asylum has been increasingly politicized as an alternative route for economic immigration in the EU” and that this explains why asylum “so easily connects to illegal immigration” (ibid.). According to Huysmans, there was an ongoing “Europeanization of migration policy” (ibid.). Further, Huysmans states that the issue of border control became an issue of security, by making the internal market connected to security issues. In this process the increase of criminal activities by “terrorist, international

criminal organizations, asylum-seekers and immigrants” were seen as side effects of the internal market (ibid.:760).

In 1985, France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg started the Schengen<sup>9</sup> Group that abolished the border control between the states. This was further developed with more members and more countries without border controls between them. With the abolition of internal borders and the fact that if one has entered one of the member states one can enter them all without any checks, that came with the Schengen Agreement, the issue of external borders became more important. At the beginning, control of the external borders was regulated outside the Union treaties, such as the Ad Hoc Working Group on Immigration (1986). The members of this working group “agreed two conventions: the Dublin Convention on Asylum in 1990, and the External Frontiers Convention in 1991” (Hix and Høyland 2011:282). The former aimed to “prevent multiple asylum applications” (ibid.). The latter “provided for the mutual recognition of visas for non-EU nationals” and a person from outside the EU no longer needed visa for travelling to another member state “for a period of less than three months” after first having the papers in order to get into one EU state (ibid.283). However, several member states did not want to ratify these new rules (ibid.).

So far the European Union had a two-pillars structure. The Treaty that established the European Community governs the first pillar, the pillar of the European Community, and in this pillar we find the Common Policies and Actions, the Economic and Monetary Union and the Citizenship of the European Union. The second pillar is the Common Foreign and Security Policy pillar where we find “all areas of Foreign and Security Policy” (George and Bache 2001:213-214). In the Treaty of the European Union (The Maastricht Treaty 1992) a third pillar was introduced, the Justice and Home Affairs pillar (Guiraudon 2000:256). This pillar dealt with (amongst other things) the issues of immigration (George and Bache 2001:213-214, Hix and Høyland 2011:276). The work of the Ad Hoc working group were now included in the regulations of the Union in the third pillar (Hix and Høyland 2011:283). The Amsterdam Treaty (1999) moved the regulation of immigration issues to the “main body of the treaty” (the first pillar), and the member states decided to “create an area of freedom, security and justice within five years of entry into force of the treaty, by May 1 2004” (Hix and Høyland 2011:276).

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix for more information about the Schengen Agreement

According to the Amsterdam Treaty, the Council should adopt “measures on asylum, refugees and displaced persons” (Guiraudon 2000:253). Further, it should adopt measures on the “absence of any controls on persons crossing internal borders...on the crossing of external borders ... and on the freedom of movement of third country nationals within the EU” (ibid). This new policy area was adopted at the Tampere European Council in 1999, and the Tampere programme “called for the EU to develop common policies on asylum and immigration, while taking into account the need for a consistent control of external borders to stop illegal immigration” (Léonard 2010: 234). The Hague Programme decided on an asylum policy that would be common to the member states, and this was to be in place by 2010. At this Programme, the member states also decided to make a European External Borders Agency (Hix and Høyland 2011:276) and on October 26, 2004, FRONTEX were created (Léonard 2010:232).

#### **4.4 Expectations to the analysis**

As there is little research on the anti-immigration parties, or on Front National and Vlaams Belang, in the European Parliament there are few grounds to make any expectations from how the two parties act or argue in the immigration debate. Further and because of this, this master thesis is of a more explorative nature. However, from the theory chapters there are possible to draw some expectations. From chapter 4.1.3 we see that according to the theory of second-order elections, the election to the European Parliament is seen as a national contest. One can then imagine that the representatives from Front National and Vlaams Belang would in some way focus on the national situation in France and Belgium and the effect of immigration to their own country. The nationalist aspect of the two parties also suggests this. Also, they are representatives from their home countries and represent their own nationals.

Second, as Jamin suggests, it is expected that the arguments and the solutions these representatives have will be radical. They cannot agree to a middle way, but instead want all or nothing. Third, as the chapter about the European Parliament shows, the non-attached members are usually quite active in debates and in situations where they are allowed to ask questions. This is the only way they can show their politics and try to affect the policies of



the European Parliament. It is therefore expected that the representatives will be very active in the immigration debate. Further, this is a field that is very important to these parties. However, the analysis will not compare the level of activity of other parties, but it will show the level of activities of the representatives in total and the number of speeches about immigration.

It could also be expected that the representatives from Front National would be more open for a closed France, as France as a large country is less dependent on the free market than the European Union offer than an independent Flanders would be. Vlaams Belang is fighting for an independent Flanders, which, if it happens, will be much dependent on the free market of the European Union. Because of this they are expected to be less anti-European Union than Front National.



## 5 Front National – ‘La France et les Français d'abord!’

The far right in France is as old as the First Republic (Art 2011:120), and has gone through distinct phases such as the Vichy regime and the Poujadism. Even though the anti-immigration parties, as we know them today, are new and for the most part only emerged in the 1980s (Ignazi 2003:83), there is some form of continuity. Poujade was a section leader in the Vichy “Compagnons de France” (Shields 2007:68) and Jean-Marie Le Pen signed up for the Poujadist cause and was “entrusted with one of the movement’s parallel associations, the UDJF”, the youth wing of the UDCA (ibid.:72). There is no room for the whole history, and neither is it necessary for the purpose of this master thesis. The history of far right parties in France is long and complex, however, a brief review of Le Pen’s way to power and the history of Front National will be given.

As already mentioned, the Poujadist movement (official name was *Union de Défense des Commerçants et Artisans* (Defence League for Shopkeepers and Artisans (UDCA)) began in 1953, and was a local protest movement “by small shop-keepers against the punitive effects of an anachronistic tax system and the high-handedness of government inspectors in clamping down on tax fraud” (Shields 2007:68). Pierre Poujade worked as a stationer and was also a municipal councillor from Saint-Céré. In the middle of the 1950s, great amounts of the French people worked as small retailers and were thereby largely affected by the “modernisation of the commercial sector” (Shields 2007:69).

On 5 October 1972, Front National pour l’Unité Française was founded, and it was founded “with the express purpose of contesting the legislative elections of March 1973” (Shields 2007:169,171). The party was formed as a “union of diverse right-wing radical and extremist groups” (Betz 1994:13). In the beginning, the leaders of the party did not agree in the party programme. The delegates from Ordre Nouveau, about 50 percent of the “floor”, wanted a “neo-fascist national right party similar to the Italian Movimento Sociale Italiano”. Le Pen, on the other side, did not want to follow the neo-fascist rout, and he exalted the “national tradition of the French right” and advocated “the creation of a party operating within legality” (Ignazi 2003:90). The party developed more in the terms of what Le Pen wanted, and the first

programme was “low profile and bargaining-oriented vis-à-vis the moderate right” (ibid.:91). The legislative election in 1973 was not a great success for the party, as it received less than 0,5 percent of the national vote and 1,32 percent in the constituencies the party stood for election (Shields 2007:171.). In the political campaign, Front National had a great empathy for the professions that Poujadism had fought for in the 1950s (ibid.:173). However, in areas where the Poujadist attracted most votes, Front National received less votes. In areas where the Poujadist had attracted less votes, the Front National attracted more. While the Poujadist movement had been a “predominantly small-town and rural movement”, Front National achieved support in more urban areas with other “socio-economic problems” (Shields 2007:194). Further, Front National received support in the 1980s from areas that did not support the ‘extreme-right’ in the Fourth or Fifth republic and also achieved support from the “constituencies of mainstream right and left” (Shields 2007:193-194). This shows that the far right of the second wave distinguishes itself from the third wave, and that it attracted different voters.

According to Ignazi, the original values of the party were “anti-communism, nationalism, immigration, a strong state” and “the defence of traditional values“ (Ignazi 2003:90). Even though it was one of the original values, immigration was not given that much attention as the “great enemy for the extreme right was still communism” (Shields 2007:173). In the presidential election of 1974, Le Pen achieved 0,75 percent in the first round (ibid.:177), and in the legislative election in 1978 the party received 0,29 percent of the votes on a national basis. Even the first direct election to the European Parliament in 1979, where the proportional representation gave the party a bigger chance to win than in the two round majority system in France, the party did not achieve the minimum threshold of 5 percent (ibid.:181-182). In the campaign for the legislative election in 1978, the party used slogans as “A million unemployed is a million immigrants too many!” and “France and the French First!” (ibid.:185). But only “gradually” did Le Pen embrace “immigration as his privileged campaigning theme”, as he saw the value that the anti-immigration propaganda could have, particularly with the “working-class voters” (ibid.).

In an interview with the party leader in 1978 he warned about the “demographic crisis facing France and the demographic explosion of the third world” and he called for a ‘hierarchy’ that would “favour the French above foreigners” (Shields 2007:186). The party further in 1978 called for a “defence of the West” and argued that the “massive presence of foreign workers

on our soil” was the “principal cause of unemployment” (Shields 2007:186). They also argued that this was “a danger for the security and health of our fellow countrymen, which, along with the drop in the national birth rate, could in time place at risk the very existence of our people” (Shields 2007:186). The party’s discourse on immigration is, according to Ignazi, that “ethnic-cultural differences are unavoidable, and must not be eliminated”. These differences create “tension in society” by “reducing the sense of national identity” and by “contributing to delinquency and unemployment”, which is only resolvable “with the expulsion of aliens” (Ignazi 2003:92).

In the French parliamentary election in 1981 Front National achieved only 0,18 percent (Ignazi 2003:94). However, in the European election in 1984, Le Pen’s “Front d’Opposition Nationale pour l’Europe des Patries” won 10 of the 81 French seats (Shields 2007:192), which corresponds to 11,08 percent (Ignazi 2003:94). Here we see the effects of the second-order election and the difference between plurality vote and proportional representation system that we did not see in 1979, as Front National managed to achieve much more votes in the European election than in the national election. This also marked a change in the support for Le Pen and the anti-immigration stance in France (Shields 2007:192) as in the later national election until 1998, both parliamentary, regional and presidential, the party never achieved less than 9,6 percent (Ignazi 2003:94). In the presidential election of 1988 Le Pen received 14,4 percent of the votes and 15 percent in 1995 (ibid.).

Before the parliamentary election in 1993, the party changed its policy, from the “ultra-liberal” programme in 1978 to a more “socially-minded agenda” with the programme “The 300 measures for the renaissance of France” (Ignazi 2003:100). The party proclaimed that it was the “defender of low-income people” who, according to the party, was “more affected and more frightened by the double process of immigration and economic globalisation” (Ignazi 2003:100). At the party congress in 1994 the party stated that “the real national sentiment and interest threatened by the EU, international finance, and capitalism could only be represented by a popular and national party” such as Front National (Ignazi 2003:100). In the 1990s the moderate right was rejecting to conclude any agreements with the part (Ignazi 2003:99). From a survey conducted at the late 1990s, Ignazi states that the party’s electorate scores higher in rejection of immigration, pessimism for the future, xenophobia and the ineffective working of the democracy than the average French voter. The electorate have also a lower confidence in the European Union (Ignazi 2003:104.105).

Regional election in 2004, the party achieved 15,11 percent in the first round (Shields 2007:297). The party wanted to “withdraw France completely from the EU, breaking all institutional ties stretching back to the Treaty of Rome in 1957, and to reassert full French sovereignty in political, economic, fiscal, judicial and other domains” (Shields 2007:299). The same year, Jean-Marie Le Pen was convicted of “incitement to racial hatred” as he had said “the massive explosion of the Muslim population ... would ultimately render the French cowering outcasts in their own land” (Shields 2007:300). This reference to the Muslim population suggests that Front National has developed into a ‘fourth wave’ party. In the European election in 2004 the party achieved 9,81 percent and got seven seats, which was an increase from 5,7 percent and five seats in 1999 (ibid.).

## **5.1 Front National in European Parliament, 2004-2009**

The following is a discussion of some of the arguments from the representatives from Front National concerning immigration in the Sixth European Parliament.

### **Asylum**

According to Bruno Gollnisch, a better situation for asylum seekers in Europe will lead to more economic immigrants, and he says “the new social, financial, family and other rights that you wish to force the Member States to grant to asylum seekers will act as a magnet for all would-be economic immigrants”. Bruno Gollnisch also proclaims that asylum is often just a pretext that prospective economic immigrants use so that they will not be turned away. Carl Lang also argues that better rights for asylum seekers will lead to more immigration and he says that “by adopting this second phase of the ‘asylum package’, Brussels is facilitating and encouraging global immigration to Europe” and that this new system will “cover all those who wish to migrate”. He goes as far as saying that there is one objective behind the desire to create a common asylum system in Europe and that this is to give the members states the legal option of “receiving as many potential immigrants as possible”. When looking at the representatives’ argumentation it is clear that they juxtapose immigrants and asylum seekers, and that economic immigrants will abuse the asylum procedure to get into Europe. This will

in their view lead to more immigration. Huysmans mentions the confusion of asylum and immigration, as seen in chapter 4.3, and that asylum is connected to illegal immigration as it is seen as an “alternative route for economic immigration” (Huysmans 2000:755). This means that it is not just the representatives from Front National who connects asylum and illegal immigration.

The representatives also argue that people abuse the asylum procedure, and Bruno Gollnisch argues that “It is the abuse of the procedure for illegitimate purposes that slows down the assessment of genuine asylum applications”, and that people “can lie about their origins and languages, and can destroy their papers and so on, so as not to be deported”. Jean-Marie Le Pen says that “The report by the Communist Member, Mr Catania, recommends the establishment of a European pro-immigration policy”, and “By trying to transform asylum law into a normal branch of immigration, Mr Catania is paving the way for a variety of abuses and is turning illegal immigrants into scapegoats”. It is clear by the argumentation that the focus is on the effect the legislation will have on Europe, and not the situation for asylum seekers. Both Le Pen and Gollnisch also focus on people that abuse the system. Jean-Marie Le Pen starts his explanation of vote by separating himself from the rapporteur and to stereotype him by calling him a communist. Second, he argues that the rapporteur is recommending a ‘pro-immigration policy’ when the report is about “the future of the European Common Asylum System”. The European Parliament adopted the text on the resolution on the future of the Common European Asylum System by 593 votes for the text, 65 voted against it and 18 absent (European Parliament 2009). This shows that the majority of the other representatives disagree with the representatives from Front National on this matter.

## **Demography**

In the recent years Europe has gone through demographic challenges such as aging populations (Cerna 2013:180). In this category we find arguments relating to this challenge.

Bruno Gollnisch argues that the free movement of persons has led the members of the European Union and the President to accept and to recommend that a mass immigration policy is used “as the only means of replacing future generation” and that this has “disastrous consequences” that “we can clearly observe today”. He proposes that the demographic challenge should rather be solved by a real family-focused policy. Bruno Gollnisch further

argues that “We are strongly opposed to an accelerated Europeanisation of immigration policies, the aim of the latter being merely to organise migratory flows so that Europe’s ageing populations are replenished. Carl Lang argues for the same thing as he is explaining that “Ultra-Europeans seem to see immigration of job seekers and people as the miracle solution to the problems of labour shortages and falling birth rates experienced by all Member States. This foolish attitude is an admission of powerlessness: Europe, as it stands, has nothing to suggest that can meet the challenges it is facing”. To a report on the demographic future of Europe he argues that “Like all Europeanists in power, our fellow Member does not want to renew the European population, but to replace it with immigrants from Africa and Asia”. Jean-Claude Martinez says that the world is getting older and that “the demographic consequences are well-known: increases in expenditure on health and pensions, the need for millions of jobs providing personal care and a shortage of staff resulting in a migration influx”.

All the three representatives agree that there is a demographic challenge in Europe and that the solution to this is not immigration. Two of the representatives mention that immigrants are to ‘replace’ European population. This creates a picture of a Europe in the future with less Europeans and more immigrants. This corresponds well with the idea that anti-immigration parties have of immigrants threatening the European culture, and that Europe will no longer be of Europeans. It is clear that they found that nothing is done in European Union to meet this challenge, as they say that the use of immigration is an admission of powerlessness and that Europe has nothing that can meet the challenge of demography. The solution to the demographic challenge, they argue, is to have a real family focused policy, and Carl Lang says that “large-scale birth promotions policy” should be implemented “based on the family and the embracing of life”.

### **Stop and reverse**

This category is a collection of arguments about the level of immigrants in Europe. Carl Lang explains that “the safeguarding of the identity and freedom of the European people demands that “there should be” a policy implemented to reverse migratory flows”. This argument touches the stance given in several of the categories, that immigration threatens the European identity, an argument that correspond well with what is found in the theory of anti-immigration parties and that immigration is seen as a cultural threat to Europe. To describe the situation of immigration in Europe, Bruno Gollnisch has said that it is crucial to stop the



“immigration suction pump” effect and there is an “unprecedented wave of illegal immigration”. He also claimed that every day immigrants are “arriving in huge numbers in the coast of Europe” and that there has been “40 years of massive and uncontrolled immigration”. The other representatives argue pretty much in the same way, and Carl Lang explained that Europe is “under the threat of being flooded by immigration on a global scale”. Carl Lang further argues that there is “intermittent floods of illegal immigration” and that Europe is being “swamped by illegal immigration” and that this “in essence cannot be controlled. Marine Le Pen argues that there is a “tidal wave of immigration”. Jean-Marie Le Pen also has arguments that fit this category, and he argues that immigration is a threat that is hanging all over the nations of Europe and the “migratory invasion has only just begun”. Carl Lang offers a solution to this, and he says that there should be introduced “zero immigration”.

First of all it is clear that the representatives from Front National is not satisfied with today’s situation and the level of immigrants, which we knew from the fact that it is an anti-immigration party. Second, the representatives use words to describe the situation as not under control, that nobody knows the real number of immigrants arriving to Europe. Third, the representatives use words such as ‘immigration suction pump’, Europe is “under threat”, “tidal wave” and “migratory invasion”, which are descriptions that may frighten people and many would say it is an exaggeration of the situation.

### **Integration and assimilation**

In this category we find the arguments about integration of immigrants. Bruno Gollnisch explains that if we let students be taught in their own language, recruit teachers for them and respect and even promote their culture, we will not have integration, this will lead to the “ghettoisation of our societies, to the blurring of identities, and to the acculturation of all”. He further makes the distinction between ‘their traditions’ and ‘our laws’ as he is arguing that immigrant women, or those of immigrant descent “sometimes attach more value to respect for their traditions than to respect for the law” and that they are, then, “very far from being instrumental in promoting their children’s integration”. Lydia Schenardi also mentions the differences in cultures and she is using the example of female genital mutilation as an example of this. She says that immigrant populations must comply with our legislation and our respect for the individual and not bring with them these unacceptable and barbaric practices. Marine Le Pen is not satisfied with the immigrants’ effort to integrate and argues

“in order for immigrant groups to be integrated, they must show a greater desire for this to take place and make the necessary efforts to assimilate”.

Carl Lang also mentions the differences in cultures and he explains that it is more difficult to assimilate immigrants from mostly Africa and Asia because “the immigrants come from cultures alien to our civilization”. He explains that the integration policy Europe is a “true national disintegration policy, of which we have fallen foul through excessive Communitisation”. The arguments in this category is an example of arguments claiming ‘their culture’ is incompatible with ‘our’, and that promoting ‘their culture’ will have an effect on the European identity. In their view, there is a clear difference between their culture and identity and ours, and this cannot go together, promoting the one is negative for the other. We also see that the representatives use both ‘integration’ and ‘assimilation’ in their argumentation.

### **Situation in third country**

In the immigration debate we also find arguments about the situation in third countries. The representatives discuss the effect of emigration on the third countries, and argue that there is a connection between development and emigration. The fact that children are left behind in third countries proves, according to Bruno Gollnisch, that “immigration is a human drama which creates inhumane situations”. He further argues that the only solution to this is to “reverse the immigration flow, to dissuade those who are tempted to leave their country, to promote development and ensure that families are reunited only in the countries of origin”. By this, he connects his stance in the immigration debate to the effects emigration has on third countries. He further elaborates the connection between development in third countries and immigration by saying that “It is quite obvious that there is a link between development and migration: hundreds of thousands of people are forced into emigration by poverty, and it is clear, as the *Front National* has been saying for years, that development policies are needed that will enable these people to stay in their own countries by giving them the means to live there with dignity”. This is an interesting argumentation as he sees the need for resources, or at least policies, to improve the living standard in third countries.

Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel also mention the consequences of immigration on third countries. They argue that the Member States are told to “implement measures aimed at improving the situation of these children left behind and guarantee them normal

development, in terms of their education and social life. It is like being in a dream!” It is not the children who stay behind that should be helped, it is rather “the families and the entire populations from these countries who should be helped and encouraged to stay at home”. Carl Lang further elaborates this by saying that we need to “allow and encourage these people to stay in their own countries, to find work there and to base their families there”. A new Europe, he says, must promote a foreign policy that involves “development aid to third countries so that those countries, which are experiencing emigration on a massive scale, can stabilize their populations by significantly improving living standards”.

Also Marine Le Pen argues that development in third countries will lead to less immigration, and she also mentions that cooperation between Africa and Europe is important for this to happen. She argues that “the only reasonable course for the European and African continents lies in close cooperation. Europeans and the French need to know that they have everything to gain from the success of better cooperation, for the balanced development of Africa will help loosen the threatening stranglehold of migration and help reverse the flows”. Even though the representatives seem concerned about the development in third countries, they also add that this will decrease the level of immigration to Europe.

### **National self-determination**

A common European immigration policy is of great concern for the representatives, as they want the member states to regulate their own immigration level and policy. Bruno Gollnisch argues that “we agree that there is a need for cooperation with those European countries that, due to their geographic location, are in the front line for migration flows and have difficulty dealing with them, but this absolutely must not result in a European policy that tells the States whom they must welcome into their territory”. He is positive to cooperation with the entering countries, but is against that this should affect the Member States to be in control of their immigration policy. He further argues that each state has a prerogative in the field of immigration policy, which means that they have “a sovereign right to select the foreigners who are permitted to enter their territory and to control the entry, residence and the extent of the rights of these foreigners”.

Bruno Gollnisch also argues that “We believe that the EU does not and should not have competence in the field of immigration” and that “no immigration policy can be anything but national”. The member states “must refuse to lose yet more of their powers in relation to

protecting their identities and to securing their borders”. The last argument shows that in his view, the member states already have lost some of their powers in protecting the national identity and their borders. He also questioned the competence the European Union has in the field of immigration.

Lydia Schenardi also argues that the member states themselves should be in control of the immigration policy and she claims that the European nations need to “take a leaf out of Switzerland’s book, take their future back into their own hands and be able to protect themselves effectively against the onslaught of migration”. Both Gollnisch and Schenardi argue that immigration policy should be a national concern, and not a European one. One part of this is that they want less interference from the European Union in national matters in general. Another part is that their stance in the immigration debate is different from other representatives in the European Parliament, and a common European immigration policy may not be the strict policy that they want.

### **Illegal employment**

Under this category we find arguments about the sanctions against employers who hire illegal immigrants. Bruno Gollnisch is positive to this regulation by saying “The general prohibition of employing unauthorised workers to deter illegal immigration can only be viewed favourably, just as sanctions against employers who resort to such workers – often to exploit them – can only be viewed favourably; such employers are nothing more than modern-day slave-traders”. In this case he is positive towards a European Union immigration policy, which is not very often.

Carl Lang did also say discuss the regulation of employers of illegal immigrants. To a report on the issue he explains his vote to it by saying that “Although this report is interesting on a number of points and sketches out a battle plan against illegal immigration, it contains some enormous stumbling-blocks. There are no specific measures to protect the internal and external borders of the Union. There are no measures in relation to the policy of expelling illegal immigrants back to their country of origin. It simply defines a person who has entered the territory of the Union illegally as an illegal immigrant who has rights”. This argumentation is more in line with the argumentation given by the representatives in other categories. Even though he seems in a way satisfied with the proposal per se, he focuses more on what the proposal is not regulating. One could ask if the regulations that Lang says is

missing from this proposal even belong in this proposal about employers of illegal third – country nationals, or if he just wants to mention that he is not satisfied with the immigration policy. Carl Lang ends his explanation of vote by adding “We reject this philosophy that is dangerous for the people and nations of Europe. We reassert their right to defend themselves and to remain themselves”. Here he exploits the situation to say what he feels about too much interference from the European Union, a statement that could also be placed under the “national self-determination” category. By adding that this philosophy is dangerous he is framing the proposals as very negative.

### **Discrimination**

Bruno Gollnisch argues that there are things that some people do demand for immigrants, which are not “accessible to our own fellow citizens”. In his view then Europeans are treated discriminatory relative to immigrants. He further elaborates this by saying that in Europe, “hundreds of thousands of legal and illegal immigrants enter every year, attracted not by the prospect of work (in France only 7 percent of legal immigrants come to work), but by the still too numerous social benefits and other rights offered to and sometimes reserved for them, without anything being demanded for them or with no facility to demand anything of them in return”. First of all he is arguing that the benefits immigrants receive are in many cases the reason for why they enter the borders of Europe. Second, the benefits the immigrants get are too much. Third, Europe does not demand or get anything in return for the resources spent.

Bruno Gollnisch explains this even further, arguing that to offer “full equality of treatment between European citizens and nationals of third countries, without any concern of guaranteeing any reciprocal treatment, merely serves as a strong incentive to migrate that already exist in the form of the enormous, indiscriminate and suicidal generosity of our social security systems”. With this statement he does not speak of discrimination by different treatment, but that a similar treatment between the citizens of Europe and immigrants from third countries will lead to more immigration. By calling the social security system ‘suicidal generous’, he is expressing that he is not satisfied with it. One could also interpret it, as he does not think the system will last and therefore it is suicidal. Every benefit they get, the social security system and the help immigrants receive, will in his eyes lead to more immigration. This argumentation fits with what Jupskås says about anti-immigration parties and that they do not want foreigners to have the same rights as the ethnic majority.

In regards to illegal immigrants, he argues more specific that if we fund repatriation of illegal immigrants and give them cash intensives and aid for reintegration and employment, this is in a way “a bonus for acting illegally”. This argument can be compared with the argument given by Carl Lang that sanctions against employers who employ illegal immigrants are defining illegal immigrants as a person with rights. If we give illegal immigrants some rights at all, we are, in the view of Bruno Gollnisch and Carl Lang, giving them a reward for acting illegally.

Carl Lang discusses positive discrimination and he explain that France is an example of a country where foreigners are living illegally and are “housed in reception centres or in hotel, are fed and have their children schooled and that they benefit from free state medical assistance, which is not the case for ethnic French people”. This is an example of the mentioning of national situation in the argumentation. By saying this, he argues that illegal immigrants receive more benefits than the ethnic French people do. Carl Lang elaborates and argues that positive action “breaks with the principle of equality between citizens of the same country”, and measures, such as priority access to certain professions, “constitute discrimination against our countries’ nationals, who do not have the opportunity to have immigrant status”. It is clear that he thinks this treatment is unfair for the ethnic Europeans, as they do not get the same treatment. Regarding the Erasmus programme, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel argue that the European Union is “again favouring those from outside the EU and exhibiting its penchant for immigration on a huge scale”. In sum it seems like every step taken to better the immigrants situation in Europe is seen as negative, discriminating and something that will increase the level of immigration in Europe.

### **External borders and FRONTEX**

Bruno Gollnisch argues that its “task seems destined to increase, to become more complex, and, in fact, insurmountable, as long as the root of the problem is not tackled”. What he mentions as the root of the problem is that “on the one hand, Europe remains a social and financial Eldorado for would-be illegal immigrants, in spite of the dangers of their journey and the problems they encounter on the ground; on the other, cooperation policy, as inadequate as it is, is being threatened by the immigration of degree-holding professionals orchestrated by the EU itself”. This is an example of argumentation where the root cause is addressed, and even though FRONTEX can be seen as a way to reduce illegal immigration, he is not satisfied with it. What he means by the cooperation that FRONTEX involves, is threaten by the immigration of people with degrees is unclear. He finishes his explanation of

vote by adding that “it is therefore crucial to stop the immigration suction-pump effect and the policies under way”. He uses this chance to mention that he wants the immigration to be reduced or stopped, and he has nothing constructive to add regarding FRONTEX.

Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel are in a way more positive to FRONTEX in their explanation of vote as they explain that FRONTEX’s remit allows it to “provide its support to joint return operations and contribute in some, albeit small, way to the daily fight against illegal immigration”. On the other hand, they also add that “We should keep in mind, however, that there is no use in closing a few gaps allowing illegal immigrants to pass through if all the EU Member States do not react as one to denounce the Schengen Agreement and to re-establish real controls at all their borders, both on land and at sea”. This means that in their view, as long as the Schengen Agreement is in place, FRONTEX will not work well. Jean-Marie Le Pen is not very positive to FRONTEX and he explains that “the task of monitoring thousands of kilometres of eminently porous coastline or land borders cannot be entrusted to others, and the Members State’s shortcomings in this regards cannot be made up for by FRONTEX, this European setup that is supposed to monitor Europe’s borders”. He also mentions “it is crucial to be able to monitor our own borders at a time when immigration is a worldwide phenomenon”. Here he discusses the issue of national self-determination, and that the member states should themselves control their own borders, and not a cooperating agency like FRONTEX. This could be interpreted that he also, as Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel, thinks that it is difficult for FRONTEX to work as long as the Schengen Agreement is followed. In the same debate he said that “the truly disastrous Schengen Agreement, applied since 1985, needs to be repealed”.

Marine Le Pen seems positive to the control of the external borders, but does not think that FRONTEX is doing this. She argues that “if we are to fight illegal immigration effectively there is one measure that has to be introduced as a matter of urgency: re-establish the European Union’s external border controls. This gimmick that is Frontex, a real empty shell with insufficient men or equipment that is not even supported by some European countries, anxious as they are to preserve their sovereignty over immigration management, will never save Europe from this infernal spiral”. The Schengen Agreement is a recurrent theme in the discussion of FRONTEX among the representatives from Front National, which is not that surprising as the opening of internal borders is making the security of external borders more

important. It is also clear that FRONTEX, in their view, is not enough as it stands to protect the external borders.

### **Internal borders and the Schengen Agreement**

The discussions of FRONTEX and the internal borders must be seen in relation to each other, which is clear from the argumentation. According to Bruno Gollnisch, one of the major causes for the problem of “influx of illegal immigrants” of certain European islands, is the removal of internal borders” and “the main source of the problems of illegal immigration, lack of security and trafficking of all kinds is the lack of effective control of the European Union’s internal and external borders”. He points out a clear link between the opening up of the internal borders, which the Schengen Agreement does, and immigration. Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel also argue that the challenge of illegal immigration is “principally a product of the Schengen Agreement which abolished the controls at the internal border of the Member States”. They argue further that the European Union would be “incapable of putting an end to the mass immigration that take place along its coast and land borders because of a lack of controls at the Member States’ internal and external borders”. Marine Le Pen and Lydia Schenardi also mention the connection between immigration and the Schengen Agreement. According to Le Pen, “Europe itself is to blame for the continuing and exponential problem of immigration” because it signed-up to the “criminal Schengen Agreement”. She adds that the Schengen Agreement must be annulled, and that “quickly”. Schenardi explains that the abolition of EU border controls that followed the Schengen Agreement resulted in “the floodgates open to uncontrolled immigration”.

Carl Lang calls the Schengen Agreement “disastrous”, and he explains that it is “high time we tackled the real causes of human trafficking and illegal immigration” which is “the lack of secure, protected borders in Europe”. The obvious consequence of the Schengen Agreement and of an area without border, he says, is “ that a change in the migration policy of one Member State affects migration flows in other Member States”. This means that member states with less strict immigration policy will affect the member states with stricter policy, as a person that enters legally in one state can also enter the other member states. This could be interpreted as an argument for a common immigration policy, but as seen under the category ‘national self-determination’, the representatives are against this. Jean-Marie Le Pen also touches on the effect of open borders, and he argues that the Schengen Agreement enables



“any illegal immigrants arriving in Spain, Italy or elsewhere” to enter France and “benefit from all the social benefits provided there”.

As we saw under the category about FRONTEX, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel also explain that the response of the European Union on the challenge of illegal immigration has been to “create a European external border control Agency: FRONTEX”, and we should keep in mind that “there is no use in closing a few gaps allowing illegal immigrants to pass through if all the EU Member States do not react as one do denounce the Schengen Agreement and to re-establish real controls at all their borders”. In another document, Carl Lang further connects the protection of internal and external borders and argues that Europe is unable to “manage its own external borders without having internal borders”. Which means, as discussed in the FRONTEX category, that FRONTEX and the protection of the external borders will not work as long as the internal borders are open. However, the FRONTEX owes its existence to the Schengen Agreement, without the opening up of internal borders there is less use for the protection of the external borders.

### **The Blue Card and Brain Drain**

In this category, the arguments about the European Blue Card are presented. The arguments seem to have two parts, the first being that the Blue Card will lead to more immigration. The second part is that this immigration will lead to a brain drain in third countries. It is not surprising that they argue that it will lead to more immigration, as it is the idea behind the Blue Card to attract highly skilled workers to Europe. Therefore it is not very surprising that they are against it. The arguments about the alleged brain drain in third countries could also be placed in the category “situation in third country”. It is, however, placed in this category to highlight the arguments about the Blue Card, and because the representatives also argue that it has an effect on Europe.

To the first part of the argumentation, Bruno Gollnisch argues that the system of the Blue Card will “not take the place of uncontrolled immigration, but will add to it and make it worse” and that the Blue Card will be a new “suction pump for immigration”. Regarding the family reunification rules connected to the Blue Card, he argues that if the European Union opens up for instant admission rights for family members with no real limit in time this will “encourage permanent populating immigration”. Carl Lang also argues that the Blue Card will lead to more immigration, by saying the Blue Card is “nothing but an indraught to the

entire world to attract millions of new immigrants”. Europe should not follow the policies of the Blue Card, but “a policy for returning immigrants to their countries”. He further argues that it is idiotic, to be happy with the idea that “to encourage legal immigration, and to do so mainly by the means of the European Blue Card, which would essentially be a European work permit for immigrants, will reduce the level of illegal immigration”. If you open the doors to some, “you are opening them to everyone”. He argues as if he does not believe that the Blue Card only will let the high skilled workers enter Europe, but also other immigrants, both legal and illegal.

Marine Le Pen also participates in the debate about the effect of the Blue Card in Europe, and she argues that the European Blue Card system is guaranteeing legal immigration for employment purposes, and that the stated aim of these measures are “solely to encourage more immigration into Europe”. None of the above mentioned representatives mention that the Blue Card only regulates the immigration of highly skilled workers. They only see it as an additional way to increase immigration. Fernand Le Rachinel, however, argues that the European Union Blue Card is in fact a real “open sesame designed to generate additional qualified immigration from outside Europe” and that this will be an “economic, social and humanitarian disaster for the people and nations of Europe” which is already “suffering in the face of illegal immigration which is out of control”. With the Blue Card, immigrant workers will also be able to “bring their families over under a fast-track procedure, thereby favouring family reunification, never mind how widespread and dangerous it is already”. Further, “immigrants will be able to accumulate periods of presence on European territory in order to obtain the status of long-term resident”. The circle has been closed, “the conditions of mass establishment and naturalisation in the Member states are in place”. As this shows, they are against the Blue Card because it will lead to additional immigration to Europe.<sup>10</sup>

In the other part of the argumentation, Bruno Gollnisch argues that the Blue Card will deprive the “developing countries of the brains which they sorely need” and thereby “aggravating their economic situation and guaranteeing the pursuit without end of increasing illegal immigration”. Carl Lang also discusses this, arguing that by plundering the elites in

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<sup>10</sup> I have tried to find the number of people entering Europe with the Blue Card in a year to find out if the argumentation fits with the reality, but in an email from EU Blue Card Network they told me that no such figures exist yet (EU Blue Card Network 2013).

the developing world, “you are going to prevent the economic development of these countries”. He further adds that “These peoples and these countries need capital and skilled workers” and with the proposal of rules related to the Blue Card you will deprive “them of both”. Jean-Marie Le Pen asks “It is humanely acceptable to steal the brains from countries which have an absolute need for these qualified employees in order to develop?” and further saying that “the replies to these questions illustrate the danger of the sort of Europe that practises a real crime against humanity with regards to the developing world”. According to Fernand Le Rachinel, what is scandalous with the Blue Card is that this will “aggravate the brain drain from third countries, especially Africa, by capturing their elite and guaranteeing their impoverishment once again”.

It is interesting that in the first part of their arguments, they are truly against the Blue Card because of its effect on Europe with more immigration, and in the second part they are concerned about the effect this will have on the third countries. It should be noted that the European Blue Card Directive was adopted in the European Parliament with 388 votes for, 56 votes against and 124 absent. This shows that there is a majority consensus in the parliament for this directive, however the high number of absent may hide a disagreement (European Parliament 2008).

### **Unemployment**

Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel argue that we (the European member states) are being recommended to open up our markets “further to foreign workers, at a time when our national jobs are under threat and unemployment is raging”. Carl Lang further explains that in times of social and economic crisis and sharply rising unemployment, “the prime necessity for the countries of the European Union is to protect their jobs” and so it is “essential to implement national and European policies of social protectionism”. We must “reserve jobs for French people in France and for Europeans in Europe”, he argues. First, this is one of the few instances where the representatives from Front National mention France in the debate. Second, this is an example of arguing in favour of European protectionism.

Carl Lang discusses that Europe want, “on the one hand, to prevent social dumping in order to protect workers” and, on the other hand, “to do everything we can to open up our economic borders a little more through the massive immigration of job seekers and people”. This is “a never-ending illustration of true pro-European schizophrenia”. By this

argumentation he also adds his negative feelings towards the pro-Europeans. He sees the protection of European workers and the immigration of job seekers as incompatible.

Carl Lang discusses this further and goes as far as arguing that the immigration of workers would turn European states into third world nations. As an answer to a report on the subject he argues that “by demanding the reduction of ‘employment gaps between third country nationals and EU citizens’, the report clearly forms part of the immigrationist policy pursued for decades in our countries which, by bringing more than 1,5 million immigrants in from outside Europe, is in the process of turning us into third world nations”. This means that in his eyes, fewer gaps between the salaries and the unemployment rate between native Europeans and immigrants would lead to more immigration and lead Europe into becoming third world nations. By arguing like this he is dramatizing the situation. He also explains that the labor force coming from those countries “that have been slow to develop” is for “the most part ill-equipped for the jobs that our economies need doing”. And “it has to be remembered that legal immigration is essentially the immigration not of workers but of people”. If our economy and employment “are going to rise like a phoenix from the ashes”, he explains, “we need to put a stop to immigration for the purpose of increasing population”. Carl Lang is both concerned immigrants will take the jobs from Europeans, and that immigrants are not suited for the jobs Europe has to offer.

Fernand Le Rachinel also discusses this, and according to him justifying “immigration by a lack of manpower, qualified or unqualified, when Europe has over twenty million unemployed”, is “penalising European workers”. To sum up the discussion, the representatives are against the idea of immigration to help with the lack of manpower because of the high level of unemployment and that many immigrants do not have the skills needed.

### **The Return Directive**

Regarding amended documents about the Return Directive, Bruno Gollnisch argues that the text “protects the rights of returnable immigrants and their continued stay in Europe much more than it ensures their repatriation”. He is not satisfied with the directive, even though it is a step towards returning immigrants to their home countries. This is an example of their way of acting as it is ‘our way or no way’. Carl Lang focuses on immigrants deliberately “losing their papers or refusing to say where they come from, so as not to be returned to their country

of origin, illegal immigrants and they alone are responsible for the period they spend in detention, which some believe, wrongly, is too long”. This is the same kind of arguments given under the ‘asylum’ category, that immigrants are lying about their origin and do not follow the rules. He also argues that the representatives that think the detention period is too long are wrong.

Marine Le Pen argues that the Return Directive is “supposed to provide for the return of illegal immigrants” and that “it is not repressive at all”. Further, “ it does not criminalise immigrants who have entered Europe illegally. Better than that, it gives them the choice between legalisation and voluntary return, all this backed up by privileges and guarantees that protect essential human rights”. This means that she thinks the directive gives the immigrants too much choices and privileges. She adds that the Return Directive is not “a good Directive. It is all a front”. This argumentation fits with her argumentation about FRONTEX, that it is an empty shell. Neither the Return Directive nor FRONTEX work as they should in her view. It could be interpreted that she is for the ideas, but in practice it is not enough. On the other hand, she is the most positive representative and she says that the Return Directive does have “the sole merit of representing the first step towards a less immigrationist policy”.

Jean-Claude Martinez explains that “with 10 million illegal immigrants in Europe and with a Boeing holding 300 passengers we would need to fill more than 30 000 Boeings in order to meet the provisions of the Directive on the return process. That means more than 1 000 Boeings taking off from each of the 27 European capitals over a period of three years”. Here he is presenting his negative view in a language people find easier to understand.

### **Terrorism**

Terrorism is only mentioned by one representative, Bruno Gollnisch, in the immigration debate. According to him a “primary cause of the terrorist threat in Europe”, is the “unbridled influx of migrant groups who have no wish to integrate or assimilate” and the Islamist threat (already demonstrated in Madrid and London) is “one of the consequences of the mass immigration policy”. He is connecting immigration to terrorism, and exploits the fear people have for such attacks.

## **Economy**

Carl Lang discusses the effect of immigration on the European economy. He argues that the “driving forces of our economy is fleeing” and it is only to be replaced by “immigration on a huge scale”. The negative contribution of this, he says, is an “unbearable economic and social burden”. He further mentions that “our leaders in Europe are mistaken: encouraging immigration is not the way to reduce levels of poverty or its prevalence, or to promote growth”. While the European Union calls for greater economic immigration and the protection of its so-called social mode, he explains that the report “reminds us that 78 million Europeans are living in poverty”. Carl Lang clearly sees a connection between poverty in Europe and immigration, and that more immigration will not be the solution for the European economy.

## **Consequences of immigration**

The representatives mention in their arguments several consequences of immigration and some are discussed under other categories, such as the lowering of wages, increase in unemployment, economic and social burdens, and the terrorist threat.

Carl Lang is concerned about the effects immigration have on the European culture and identity, which has also been discussed above. This is in general a great concern for the anti-immigration parties. He argues that “immigration, selective or otherwise, distorts the identity and culture of the people of Europe” and that immigration is “threatening our national identity”. To a policy he says will bring “nearly two million additional immigrants every year”, he argues that this is in fact “turning into a colonisation of Europe”. Other consequence Carl Lang mentions is the “explosion in ethnic violence, the islamification of many of our towns, and the challenges faced by our social security systems”. Further, “the lawlessness that are multiplying in our urban areas” is “one of the consequences of the uncontrolled immigration to which our nations have been subject for 30 years”.

Bruno Gollnisch argues that immigration leads to lower salaries for Europeans, and he explains that in Europe today, immigration “forces wages down in Europe”, and that salaries are subject to “constant downward pressure” because of the “unfair global competition and the migration policy promoted by the European Union”. He asks what is the use to promote minimum wages and sufficient income level to prevent social exclusion when at the same time promote “large scale immigration of low-cost labour?”.

To sum up the arguments from the representatives from Front National, they clearly indicate that Front National is trying to reach more than their usual voters. They do not only say that they do not want more immigration. They bring up these consequences of immigration that many people would recognize as something they do not want to happen. One example is that immigrants are to *replace* the European population. More people than the usual Front National voters would agree that this is not something they would like to see happen. In many debates they argue in a language people find easier to understand.





## 6 Vlaams Belang - ‘Eigen volk eerst!’

Vlaams Belang differ from Front National in several ways. One important difference is the history behind the formation of the two parties. Vlaams Blok (Vlaams Belang’s forerunner) was an “amalgamation of two dissident factions of the Volksunie”, the “dominant Flemish regionalist party” (Coffe, Heyndels and Vermeir 2007:143). In 1978, the nationalist and radical Vlaams-Nationale Partij (VNP) and Vlaamse Volkspartij (VVP) “merged” to form a new party, the Vlaams Blok (Jamin 2012:69). Mudde refer to this as the two parties not as much merged, but “joined lists of candidates under the name Vlaams Blok” and that the list, both its ideology and the candidates on it, was “dominated” by Vlaamse Volkspartij (Mudde 2000:85).

The Flemish movement dates back to the latter half of the nineteenth century, a time where the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium was “politically and economically subordinate to the Francophone minority” (Art 2011:107). The Dutch-speaking middle class was fighting for better rights for the Dutch speaking part of the population. During the Second World War, Vlaams Nationaal Verbond was founded, an authoritarian and Nazi-financed party. Many from the Flemish elite joined this party, and according to Art, the party were “deeply rooted in the Flemish society” (Art 2011:109). In 1954, Volksunie were founded, and many of the former politicians from Vlaams Nationaal Verbond joined the party (Art 2011:110). Volksunie “pressed for cultural and political autonomy and eventual independence” (ibid.:111). In the 1960s and 1970s, “the Flemish nationalist subculture, and particularly its far right wing, also flourished” and the far right were treated as a “legitimate political actor” (ibid.).

In 1978, Vlaams Blok participated in the parliamentary elections for the first time. At this point, Vlaams Blok was fighting for the independence of Flanders, as their most important issue, and they saw Volksunie as a party that was making too “many concessions to French-speakers” (Coffe et al.:143). In 1977, the leadership of the Volksunie signed the Egmont Pact, which called for the federalization of Belgium. This act was not taken lightly by the right wing of the party (and the whole Flemish movement was split in their stance to this (Mudde 2000:84)) and the disagreement resulted in the formation of the joint list Vlaams Blok (Art 2011:112). Vlaams Blok had between 1 and 2 percent of the votes, but at the

municipal election in Antwerp in 1982, the party received 5,2 percent of the votes (Coffe et al. 2007:143). The party had candidates standing for election in less than 30 of the 300 Flemish communities and it did most of its political activities in the city of Antwerp (Mudde 2000:87).

Historically, the leaders and the active members of the party have been members of different organisations, such as the Vlaamse Militanten Orde (a private militia), the Voorpost (a paramilitary group), the Nationalistische Studentenvereniging (an “extreme right student union”) or pro-Nazi organisations (Jamin 2010:73). The party started to change in the mid 1980s; old members left, new arrived and the party developed to be more like a “modern extreme right party” (Mudde 2000:87-88). In 1987 a youth wing of the party were founded, the Vlaams Blok Jongeren (ibid). Dutch Centrumdemocraten and the French Front National had success with their anti-immigration rhetoric in the middle of the 1980s and this was a recipe that Vlaams Blok wanted to copy. Hence, in the 1987 parliamentary campaign, the party had changed into a “fierce anti-immigrant” route (Coffe et al. 2007:143). This change gave the party one more seat in the Parliament and in addition, a seat in the Belgian Senate (ibid.). The party’s new slogan, “Eigen volk eerst!” (Own people first!) (ibid.), clearly struck home.

In the party, however, there were disagreements whether the party should continue with the focus on immigration, or if it should focus more on the “Flemish-nationalist ideology” (ibid.). The first option won, in combination with “the original nationalism” (ibid.). A year later than the party got a seat in the Senate, the party achieved 17,7 percent in Antwerp, in the municipal elections. The other political parties reacted on this success by agreeing that they will not “conclude political agreements” with Vlaams Blok and installed a cordon sanitaire against the party (ibid.). After this, the success continued, and in 1991, on 24 November, a day called Black Sunday, the party achieved 10,3 percent of the Flemish votes, and in Antwerp the party achieved 25 percent of the votes (ibid.). This resulted in 18 parliamentary seats, 12 in the parliament (Lower House) and six in the Senate (Upper House) (Mudde 2000:89). Even though the party kept growing, or maybe more accurate because the party grew, a new ‘cordon sanitaire’ was issued. The party achieved 28 percent in the local election in 1994, becoming the largest party in the local council, however, because of the cordon sanitaire the party was excluded from having any power in the next six years (Mudde 2000:90).

In 2004 the party got 24,2 percent of the votes in the Flemish region, and in Flanders it was the second largest party. The same year, the party changed its name to Vlaams Belang, after being “convicted for racism” (Coffe et al. 2007:143). The party, being under constant threat of new convictions (Jamin 2012:73), “wrote new, more moderate party manifesto trying to present itself as a viable policy party” (Coffe et al. 2007:143). In 2010 the party Nieuw Vlaamse Alliantie, which is nationalist but not racist, gained 17,4 percent and the Vlaams Belang lost voters for the first time since 1991 and achieved only 7,76 percent (Jamin 2012:69).

As for the politics of the party, Mudde finds that it is supportive of European cooperation, but not towards the “current European Union” (Mudde 2000:99). According to Mudde, the party considers the European Union’s territory too limited and its power too extended. While there has been enlargement in territory since the book came out, what is more interesting is that Mudde finds that the party “sees in European cooperation the chance for Flanders to break away from the dreaded Belgian state” (ibid.).

When it comes to immigration, 27 percent of the Vlaams Blok electorates answered in 1999 that one of the “most important reason” for voting this party is immigration, while only 4 percent said Flemish nationalism (Art 2011:106). Vlaams Belang “support both ethnic nationalism and state nationalism” (Jamin 2012:69), where national interest are superior to the individual interest (ibid.:70). It is the job of the nationalist state to support the “natural, ethnic structure and to protect the Flemish ethnic group against potential enemies” (ibid.). Further, the party wants an independent Flanders, and they reject “immigrants who threaten the cultural integrity and biological homogeneity of the Flemish people” (ibid.). Jamin finds that the core policies of Vlaams Belang is their opposition to immigration, the idea of hierarchy, a “recognition of inequalities between ‘races’, peoples and cultures and the need to set up a system of segregation” (Jamin 2012:70). Mudde mentions statements given by Annemans, a member of the party, that “the right to cultural identity includes the right to one’s own culturally homogeneous territory” (Mudde 2000:99), and the party is by this claiming to protect both the identity of the immigrants and their own. The party further defines integration as genocide since it “transforms independent ethnic communities into a ‘inferior mixture’” (ibid.). Jamin finds that it is not immigration from Eastern Europe that is the main focus of the Vlaams Belang, but immigration from Africa and the Maghreb, and

what the party refers to as ‘Muslim immigration’ (Jamin 2012:70). This immigration is, according to the party, bringing in to Flanders people who are “foreigners, refugees, fundamentalist and potential terrorist” and this is threatening “the cultural and racial integrity of the Flemish people” (ibid.) Islamophobia is, according to Mudde, the main aspect of the Vlaams Belang’s xenophobic propaganda (Mudde 2000:103), and this places the party under the ‘fourth wave’ category. The party would seldom argue about inequality based on biology but about the “fundamental natural inequality between communities” (Swyngedouw and Ivaldi 2001:5). According to Swyngedouw and Ivaldi the hierarchy in Vlaams Belang’s view is as follows:

...an ethnic hierarchy in which the Fleming stands at the top, with Dutchmen and Afrikaners (South Africa) immediately below them, as members of the same people, sharing the same language and, according to VB, also sharing the same culture. Next down the hierarchy, and still more or less equal, are the assimilated (French-speaking) Flemings of Brussels, Wallonia and French Flanders (an area in the north of France). These people live, according to the VB, in occupied territory. These groups are followed by the European foreigners. They have the same racial origins (white), but are culturally divergent, although they share a common European heritage and civilisation. At the bottom come the non-European foreigners, who share neither the language, culture, territory nor the ethnic background of the Flemings (Swyngedouw and Ivaldi 2001:5).

## **6.1 Vlaams Belang in the European Parliament, 2004-2009**

The following is a discussion of some of the arguments from the representatives from Vlaams Belang concerning immigration in the Sixth European Parliament. There is also a comparison to the argumentation of the representatives from Front National.

### **Asylum**

The representatives from Vlaams Belang do not participate in the debate about asylum at the same level as the representatives from Front National, and the only representative that do participate is Philip Claeys. He explains that he voted against a report on the future of a common European asylum system because “it clearly reflects an extreme left-wing bias

aimed at rendering any efficient asylum management system simply impossible”. He further argues that today, “every effort is being made to make life easier for actual and potential illegal immigrants”. To a report that states that the “definition of a family member is too restrictive” he argues that this “is an open invitation to even more abuses” and that “In Africa, for instance, more or less everybody is family to everybody and if we have to take that into account we might as well throw all the gates open immediately”. First, he is referring to asylum seekers as immigrants, just as the representatives from Front National do. Second, he mentions that people abuse the asylum system, which is also mentioned by Front National. Third, he is exaggerating the effects of a less strict policy of family reunification as he argues that the gates then will be open for everyone. However, he does not argue that better rights for asylum seekers will lead to more immigration, as the representatives from Front National do. Further, he does not mention economic immigrants, which is mentioned by Front National. Both parties are negative towards a common European asylum policy.

### **Demography**

In regards to the demographic challenge in Europe, Philip Claeys says that it is assumed that “the EU will need 60 million new immigrants by 2050” and “given the current problems with mass immigration, this is a crazy proposal”. He further argues that the Parliament is straying off course in considering immigration as an instrument to secure the demographic and economic future of Europe, and that “Europe already has a million unemployed immigrants, coupled with all the problems which go along with that. As more immigrants enter, these existing problems can only get worse”. Frank Vanhecke mentions the absurdity of the idea that “massive immigration of non-Europeans is economically profitable in order to alleviate the effects of the demographic situation in Europe has been demonstrated before”. He further argues that he continues to be “amazed at the naivety with which immigration is looked upon in this Parliament, as a kind of solution to Europe’s undeniable demographic problem”.

Philip Claeys explains this further by saying that “the ageing of the population in Europe is, in fact, not so much a challenge as a life-threatening problem, not only in terms of keeping our social security systems, and therefore our economies, intact, but also, quite simple, of securing the continued existence of European peoples. Solutions are sometimes put forward that only make matters worse, in fact. Just think of the plea for fresh, large-scale immigration”. “If the EU wishes to alienate itself from the public even more” he argues,

“then it should go down this route. A real solution is to encourage young families to have more children, and to create a favourable climate for this”.

First of all, it is clear that both representatives are against the idea of using immigration as a solution to the demographic challenges Europe is experiencing. This is of course no surprise as they are representatives from an anti-immigration party. They argue that Europe already has a million unemployed immigrants and this will increase with more immigration. They do not believe that immigrants can be economically profitable, and the European Parliament is naïve in this debate. Philip Claeys is dramatising the situation and calls the demographic challenge a ‘life-threatening’ problem when it comes to the social security system, the economy and the securing of the continued existence of European peoples. By calling a proposal crazy, saying that the Parliament is straying of course, saying an idea is absurd and that the Parliament is naïve, the representatives clearly distinguishes themselves from the rest of the Parliament. The same is the case for the representatives from Front National who argue that it is a foolish attitude, admission of powerlessness and calls other members for ultra-Europeans. Philip Claeys also argues that the European Union is already alienated from the public, and more immigration would lead to even further alienating. This could be interpreted as in his view, his party has politics that is better suited for the attitudes of the European people, and that the Parliament encourage policies that many people would disagree.

The two representatives have the same stance as we saw the representatives from Front National had. However, one can see a difference in the argumentation. Several of the representatives from Front National mention that immigration is to *replace* the European population, which none of the representatives from Vlaams Belang argue. Front National further dramatise the proposal and exploits the fear people may have of the European people being replaced with immigrants. Both parties have the same solution to the demographic challenge, that being more focus on the family and having more children. In their view, Europe can fix their own challenges without immigration.

### **Stop and reverse**

To describe the immigration situation in Europe Koenraad Dillen uses terms as “the tide of illegal immigration” and “the floods of economic migrants”. Frank Vanhecke uses the same kind of terms by saying it is a “scourge of the millions of illegal immigrants in Europe”.

Frank Vanhecke further explains that “Every year, hundreds of thousands of non-European

aliens enter our continent, Europe. These are legal immigrants, semi-legal immigrants but also illegal immigrants. My country, Belgium, received more than 70 000 non-European aliens last year, in addition to an unknown number of illegal aliens”. This is an example of the few times the representatives refer to the national situation, and an example of the use of the word ‘aliens’, which the representatives from Vlaams Belang use occasionally. According to Koenraad Dillen, what Europe need “is for immigration to be stopped outright”, and Frank Vanhecke explains that “Europe cannot take any more immigration” and Europe absolutely “does not need a new illegal wave of immigration. Absolutely not”.

They use words to describe the situation as alarming, that we do not know the real number of immigrants in Europe. They also argue that a decrease in the number of immigrants is not enough, it has to be stopped. The representatives argue in the same way as the representatives from Front National, the immigration situation is intolerable and unclear and both parties argue that the immigration to Europe has to stop. However, the arguments from the representatives from Vlaams Belang do not mention the identity and freedom of the European people in their discussion, which is mentioned by Front National. Further, the description of the situation given by Front National seems in a degree more negative and more focused on the effect of the level of immigrants in Europe, by using words such as “threat hanging over Europe”, “migratory invasion” and that Europe “is swamped by illegal immigration”. Both parties refer to both ‘immigration’ and ‘illegal immigration’, and they agree that both kinds of immigration have to stop.

### **Integration and assimilation**

When it comes to integration, Philip Claeys argues that “we must emphasise personal responsibility and the need for immigrants to adapt to our rules, our language, our standards and our values”. Here we see the distinction between ‘them’ and ‘us’, and that these are too different to go together so ‘them’ have to be more like ‘us’. He further argues that the “very fact that we in this House continuously talk about discrimination weakens the impulse for immigrants to integrate”. Here he connects discrimination and integration, and that the wish for immigrants to integrate decreases if discrimination is discussed. Philip Claeys goes as far as saying that the reality today, “is that so-called discrimination is often the result of a lack of willingness to integrate on the part of immigrants”. Which basically means that in many cases there is no discrimination, just immigrants that do not want to adapt to the European culture.

The separation of ‘us’ and ‘them’ is further elaborated by Philip Claeys. He explains that we as Europeans must put an end to the “lax immigration policy that allows the annual influx of 10 000 people who refuse to adapt to our laws, our standards and our values”. This suggests that as long as immigrants does not adapt to ‘our’ culture, they cannot be integrated and we should not let them into Europe. This fits well with Jupskås’ arguments about the different cultures incompatibility in the view of the anti-immigration parties. Koenraad Dillen further confirms this assumption by saying that we in Europe are in fact “willing to accept those immigrants who are prepared to assimilate”, but “we have to tell those who are not that they must go back to their countries of origin”.

Philip Claeys also sees it as “important that immigrants should learn the host country’s language”, a point also mention by Koenraad Dillen as he claims “it is up to immigrants and minorities to learn and use the language of the area which they live”. Koenraad Dillen further mentions his experience in Flanders and says “I have seen all too often that it is the multicultural ‘concentration schools’ – those with a high proportion of migrant children – that bring quality down”. The issue of foreign language seems to be of great importance to the representatives and Frank Vanhecke also discusses this. He discusses a report that according to him argues that “the so-called multiculturalism of the European countries is reinforced even further by encouraging second, third, or even fourth-generation immigrant children to develop their own language and culture on our territory and thus make even less of an effort to integrate in our society or assimilate themselves to it.” His answer to this is that “that is complete madness and flies in the face of the democratic will of the large majority of our citizens. It can only lead to even more problems, to the formation of even more ghettos, to *de facto* apartheid and, ultimately and lamentably, to violence”.

He further explains that “for example, the fact that this report is based on the idea that the education systems in the various European countries should simply adjust to the presence of non-European immigrants, rather than the other way round”. He explains “It is beyond me how this position can be squared with integration, let alone the promotion of assimilation, as the exact opposite of this will be the result”. And he argues that “Non-European immigrants are to be encouraged to continue to use their mother tongue over here, that the European Parliament is even calling for the mother tongues of foreign minorities, or of minorities originating abroad, to be included in school programmes and for Member States not only to encourage the use of the original languages but, in particular, to encourage the use of the



immigrants' main language. I am sorry, but this is madness. It will lead to the opposite of adaptation and assimilation”.

According to Frank Vanhecke, “immigrants must be accorded all political rights without any questions being asked about their willingness to integrate. It is even claimed at one point that certain cultural and religious customs must not be an obstacle to foreigners enjoying rights or being integrated into society: this even though we all know perfectly well that this is a veiled way of talking about the so-called cultural and religious customs of Islam, which are the real point at issue here and which, in fact, run completely counter to the things our European democracies have achieved and the rights enjoyed in them”. In this argumentation the difference between ‘our’ culture and ‘their’ is identified further as the incompatibility between the European culture and the Islamic culture.

To a report on the fundamental rights of the European Union 2004-2008, Koenraad Dillen argues “This is topsy-turvy land. In a normal society, rights and duties go hand in hand. In this bulky report, though, I cannot find a trace of duty on the part of aliens to integrate in our European society. Quite the reverse: only we Europeans are targeted *ad nauseam* . Well, our citizens are sick to death of the stigmatising finger-wagging from the European mandarins that is only aimed at them”. Philip Claeys sums up his attitudes towards the integration policy in Europe by explaining that the integration policy “so far adopted in most, if not all, Member States, has largely failed”.

The statements mentioned above shows that integration is an important theme for the representatives from Vlaams Belang, and that language is a great part of this. According to them, learning the language of the receiving country is an important part of the integration process. Further, they argue that immigrants must themselves contribute more to integrate, or we must send them back. The importance of learning the host country's language is not discussed much by the representatives from Front National. A reason for why language is a more important issue to Vlaams Belang than it seems to be for Front National could be the history of the Flemish people. As we saw in the theory part of this chapter, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium has been subordinate to the Francophone minority. Both parties mention the differences between ‘our’ and ‘their’ culture and that these cultures do not go together. They both also mention that immigrants have a responsibility to integrate and that they are not satisfied with the will of immigrants to do this. Further, they are both negative in

the description of the effects on European countries. Front National mention the ghettoisation of our societies, blurring of identities and acculturation, while Vlaams Belang mention that less integration will lead to more ghettos, apartheid and violence. The representatives use both ‘integration’ and assimilation’, just as the representatives from Front National.

### **Situation in third country**

The representatives from Vlaams Belang do not mention the situation in third countries much more than in the debate about the Blue Card. However, Koenraad Dillen argues that “If the human tragedy of the refugees is to be addressed, it must be done by tackling the hopeless situation in their countries of origin, not by importing transitory social tension”. None of the representatives from Vlaams Belang mention the connection between development in third countries and immigration to Europe, as the representatives from Front National did.

### **National self-determination**

Philip Claeys voted against a report “because directives of this kind undermine the Member States’ capacity to be in control of their own territories and to take the appropriate measures to maintain law and order”. This suggests that he wants the member states themselves to regulate the immigration policy and to control their borders. Frank Vanhecke explains that it is “unacceptable that people should insist on the introduction of qualified majorities in the areas of migration and integration. I think the individual Member States and peoples are entitled to a right of veto and should be able to remain in charge of their own labour market. Whilst this may all be very European, it is certainly not democratic”. The representatives argue that the member states should be in control of their own territories and labor market, but they participate less in the discussion than the representatives from Front National, and the question of self-determination seems to be more important to Front National. This could be because Front National is more against the interference from the European Union than Vlaams Belang.

### **Illegal employment**

According to Philip Claeys, it is to be welcomed that a directive “will be introduced that will penalise employers of illegal immigrants”. However, he also argues that we should be “consistent and also tackle the other factors that attract immigrants. The most important of these factors is the impunity with which aliens can come to Europe illegally. There are, in fact, Member States that reward illegal aliens, the mass regularisations in Spain, Italy and

Belgium, among others, being a case in point”. And he adds that “It is therefore not enough to tackle the employers. We must address illegal immigration in its entire context”. He explains that the report on a proposal of a directive on sanctions against employers of illegally staying third country nationals is of course, far from perfect. This is “just the tip of the iceberg, because we should also address human traffickers, networks that provide support to illegal immigrants and also, of course, Member State governments that legalise illegal aliens on a massive scale”.

First of all, he seems to be in favour of the idea of sanctions against employers that employ illegal immigrants. This argumentation also shows how the representatives sometimes are not satisfied with taking one step at the time; Philip Claeys wants everything done at once to decrease immigration. He does not mention that the directive on sanctions against employers who employ illegal immigrants define the immigrants as someone with rights, which Carl Lang from Front National does. However, both parties seem in general to be for the directive. Philip Claeys focuses more on the things that is not done, than to discuss the actual theme of the debate. Front National also mentions some “stumble blocks”, but not to the same extent as Claeys. Front National also argue on behalf of the immigrants, arguing employers often exploit them and that this is modern day slavery. Vlaams Belang do not argue on behalf of the illegal immigrants in this discussion.

### **Discrimination**

Frank Vanhecke explains that “Once again, the European Member States are called on to make it their business to discriminate positively in favour of immigrants, the logical consequence of which is that the indigenous population are to be put at a disadvantage or discriminated against”. This implies that in his view, there is discrimination in favour of immigrants and this is a disadvantage for the ethnic population.

According to Philip Claeys, “All too often the assumption is that virtually all problems involving immigrants are the result of alleged discrimination against them. This has disastrous effects, because it absolves whole population groups from personal responsibility. This policy of molly-coddling and the culture of victimhood have only made the problem worse”. He also argues, as seen under the category Integration, that “the so-called discrimination is often the result of a lack of willingness to integrate”. This is not about discrimination in favor of immigrants, but an argument that the discrimination of immigrants

is only alleged, and that the immigrants have responsibilities that they often do not fulfill. He explains this further by saying that “We must finally stop seeing minority groups, such as immigrants, as pitiful. We must stop attributing all their problems to discrimination from the outset. This left-wing discourse has only exacerbated the problems. What we need is a complete change of course”.

Both parties seem negative to discrimination in favour of immigrants. However, the two parties have placed their focus differently in the documents regarding discrimination. Vlaams Belang seem to focus more on that in many cases there is no discrimination against immigrants, but that immigrants do not want to integrate. Front National seem to focus more on immigration in favour of immigrants, and that this will lead to more immigration.

### **External borders and FRONTEX**

The representatives have mixed feelings towards FRONTEX, the idea of it and how it operates in practice. The representatives seem more positive to the idea of the control of the external borders, but are in general not satisfied with how this is carried out in practice. They are also concerned with the efforts of some member states.

According to Philip Claeys “the abolition of internal borders in the European Union” should in theory “have resulted in improved supervision of external borders, but in reality it is apparent that the system continues to exhibit quite glaring vulnerable spots”, which “international criminal networks, drug and human traffickers and illegal immigrants have all benefited from”. He argues that the protection of the internal and external borders is connected, as are pointed out by most of the discussed representatives. The statement shows that he is not satisfied with the protection of the external borders. However, he also argues that FRONTEX is a key instrument “in the fight against illegal immigration”, and FRONTEX “should be developed into an efficient instrument in the fight against illegal immigration, but also in the fight against international crime, as well as the drugs and arms trades”. He voted for the report on the evaluation and future of FRONTEX where this statement is from. Further, he argues that FRONTEX’s rapid intervention teams “are desperately needed, certainly in light of the huge shortcomings of various Member States when it comes to protecting external borders. However, “even if the Frontex’ rapid intervention teams work well and efficiently, this will all be in vain if some Member States refuse to face up to their

political responsibility”. All in all, Philip Claeys seems positive towards *idea* of FRONTEX as a tool in the fight against illegal immigration and international crimes.

Koenraad Dillen claims “Frontex does not operate as it should, not least because of a lack of resources and the necessary political backing”. This does not say anything about what he thinks of the idea of FRONTEX, just that it does not operate as it should in practice. He also sees it as a good sign that “Frontex has been given the green light to open negotiations on cooperation agreements with a number of departure or transit countries to ensure joint action against illegal immigration”. And that in itself “we can of course only welcome the extension of the tasks of Frontex that has been announced, the plans to set up a pan-European border guard and the creation of a centralised European”. This implies that he is positive to the increase of FRONTEX’s assignments, which Bruno Gollnisch from Front Nation seems more negative to. The cooperation with third states is also mentioned by Frank Vanhecke and he argues that “this framework, the agreements which FRONTEX has concluded with the authorities of third states are very important indeed”.

Koenraad Dillen mentions some shortcomings of FRONTEX as an instrument in the fight against illegal immigration, and he points out that FRONTEX “naturally stands or falls with the technical assistance and political support of the Member States, which has all too often in the past proved problematic”. Further, we cannot “pin too much faith in the strengthening of external borders and we should certainly not be blinded by the telegenic Frontex operations in the Mediterranean. Most illegal immigrants arrive in Europe legally, but simply disappear into illegality when their visas expire”. With this he is implying that FRONTEX’s role in the fight against illegal immigration can be reduced if the member states do not participate with technical assistance and political support. Further, he argues that FRONTEX does not stop the immigrants entering legally but continue to stay after their visa has expired. He also seems more negative in his view when he argues “The core issue is still that both the European Member States and the European Union are responsible for the uncontrolled and illegal immigration, with all its catastrophic effects on society. I am talking about not only the flexible visa policy and the lax tracing and repatriation policy, but also about the irresponsible waves of regularisation in some Member States, which have been an enormous draw. The extension of Schengen to the east is for the moment the latest of these damaging decisions. You might therefore ask whether Frontex is not just having to act as a lightning conductor to appease the citizens of Europe”.

Koenraad Dillen also argues “our group welcomes Frontex and the establishment of intervention brigades in the countries that are facing the problem of mass immigration, on the condition that this new instrument is deployed efficiently and not simply serves as a media spectacle”. This again suggest that he is positive to FRONTEX as long as it operates as it should. He further explains that “External border control falls within the Member States’ remit, but the flows of refugees that are common today illustrate that these external borders have become too permeable. The exponential influx of illegal immigrants can therefore only be addressed by taking additional, but not replacement, measures to support the Member States, which, it is to be hoped, is where Frontex will come in”.

Frank Vanhecke is very positive and argues that “Frontex is one of the most important agencies to have been set up in the last few years. It may make a valuable contribution in the fight against illegal immigration”. He also mentions the importance of the contribution of the member states and he explains that “Frontex is of course dependent on the willingness of the Member States to supply equipment and staff”. He finds that “Some Member States promise much but deliver little”.

All in all, the representatives from Vlaams Belang seem more positive than the representatives from Front National towards FRONTEX, at least the idea of it, if the member states contribute more. This could have a conjunction with the fact that Front National, as the reader will see under the category of internal borders and Schengen, is more negative towards the Schengen Agreement and open borders.

### **Internal borders and the Schengen Agreement**

Koenraad Dillen is quite negative in the way he speaks of the Schengen Agreement. He explains that for years “the Schengen area has been offering potential terrorists and criminals an ideal environment to carry out their criminal plans, often with impunity”. He also argues that there is “an urgent need for Europe to reflect on its open-border policy and the pernicious consequences of this policy with regards to immigration, crime and Islamic extremism”. Here he connects the opening of borders, not just to immigration, but also to crime, terrorism and Islamic extremism. He also mentions that he is “somewhat less euphoric about Schengen itself” and the fact is that “the European policy of open borders also noticeably strengthens the scope of international organised crime”. He further explains that “The system of open

borders has always demanded a further transfer of competences and ever-closer police cooperation, which will eventually result in a full-blown European police force, prosecutors and criminal law, with their positive but also their negative aspects”. Koenraad Dillen also says “A deeper and more fundamental question is whether the individual Member States themselves have taken on board the Schengen logic and the spirit of the Schengen system. Accordingly, the legalisation of illegals, people who have entered the Schengen area illegally, is a manifest violation of the Schengen Agreement”. This means that he sees the immigration policy of some member states as a violation of the Schengen Agreement.

Frank Vanhecke connects the open borders of Schengen with the protection of the external borders (which we also saw under the category regarding FRONTEX) and argues that Schengen naturally “stands or falls by the watertight control of its external borders”. He further argues that all “Schengen countries must also conduct a strict immigration policy, something that is completely at variance with, for example, the waves of mass legalisation seen in quite a few Member States in recent years”. To the enlargement of the Schengen Agreement he says that “President Barroso can tell us a thousand times that Schengen enlargement will not lead to a decrease in security, but the reality is quite different”.

Philip Claeys also mentions the connection between internal and external borders, and according to him “without efficient management of the common external borders, Schengen cannot work”. He also argues that there is currently far too much apathy, far too much leniency, and mass regularisations of illegal immigrants and that this “have put the entire Schengen concept at risk”.

The representatives are negative towards the open borders that follow the Schengen Agreement. Especially Koenraad Dillen who says that Schengen has offered terrorist and criminals an ideal environment. They also argue that the Schengen Agreement is depended on the protection of the external borders to be able to work properly. In comparison to the representatives from Front National, the representatives from Vlaams Belang focus less on the effects the Schengen Agreement has on the level of immigration. According to the representatives from Front National, the Schengen Agreement has resulted in “the floodgates open to uncontrolled immigration”. Further, as mention under the FRONTEX category, the representatives from Front National use more negative words to describe the Schengen Agreement, such as it is “criminal” and “disastrous”.

## **The Blue Card and Brain Drain**

As we saw in the section of Front National, the discussion of the European Blue Card has two sides. The first being the consequences this has on Europe with more immigration. The other side being the consequences in third countries, which is, according to the representatives from both parties, a brain drain.

According to Philip Claeys, the problem with the Blue Card “is that it organises the brain drain of precisely those people who are absolutely necessary for the development of developing countries. We attract these people to us, which means the problems in Africa get worse and there is then even greater immigration to Europe”. In the last argument, he mentions both parts of the (alleged) effect of the Blue Card, the situation in third countries get worse and the immigration to Europe will increase. Philip Claeys discusses this further arguing that “the entire concept of economic immigration and what is being referred to as the ‘blue card’ bears witness to short-term thinking”. Further, that “the subject of these notorious blue cards for economic immigration has once again been brought up and is receiving emphatic support precisely at a time when more than 20 million people in the European Union face unemployment, which is set to increase even further due to the economic crisis”. He also argues that we should, instead, adopt a policy of training and re-training people that are currently unemployed, “rather than just leaving them to their own devices in favour of an influx of new immigrants”. To a report suggesting that the Blue Card should not be restricted to highly-qualified employees, he argues that “we might as well open the floodgates fully, then”. This is a dramatisation of the situation as he argues that if the rules open up for some more employees then everybody is welcomed.

Koenraad Dillen also argues that the Blue Card will affect the third countries negatively claiming that it is “primarily the weakest people in the countries of origin in Africa, the ones who do not have the means or the clout to get themselves out, who are the victims of the immigration flows, the victims of open borders, for they are left behind, poorer than ever”. He further elaborates this by saying that “it is lamentable, however, that a report on the EU-African partnership should contain no word of mention about the problem of illegal immigration, a problem which is so pressing for both Europe and Africa, that leads to a brain drain from Africa and causes so many social problems in Europe. In addition, this report shows a degree of naivety when it calls for the European blue card scheme to discourage the



attraction of any Africans from sectors where they are needed in Africa. The report says nothing about how that can be reduced in reality”.

The consequences of the Blue Card is also mentioned by Frank Vanhecke who argues that the immigration of highly educated people “from poor countries is a tragedy for the countries of origin”. This argument only mentions the one side of the debate. However, he also touches on the other side arguing that the Blue Card “causes a brain drain from the developing world to Europe, and ultimately does not benefit either the developing countries or Europe, quite the contrary”. He further argues that “Parliament continues to argue elsewhere for ever increasing, ever more extensive legal immigration and for the European Commission’s proposals for the so-called Blue Card. It is precisely this immigration policy that is resulting in a huge brain drain from the developing countries to Western countries, and it is precisely this policy that is robbing the developing countries of the best workers that they need, including health care workers, doctors and nurses who are needed much more in Africa than in the West. I refuse to go along with such a hypocritical position”. From this last statement, it seems like the brain drain in third countries is the reasons for why he is negative for the Blue Card. However, the earlier argumentation shows that the effect in Europe, which is more immigration, also is a factor to be considered.

To sum up the discussion about the European Blue Card, all three representatives are negative to it. This is because of the effect they think this will have on both the member states and the third countries. In regards to the representatives from Front National and as mentioned above, the two parties argue for the same stance in this debate. Both parties are against the European Blue Card. However, it can be argued that the representatives from Vlaams Belang are less dramatic and negative in their explanations of the effect on Europe. The representatives from Front National argues that the Blue Card will act as an immigration ‘suction pump’ and lead to ‘economic, social and humanitarian disaster for the peoples and nations of Europe’, while the representatives from Vlaams Belang do not use such descriptions.

### **Unemployment**

Frank Vanhecke explains the situation by saying that “We are currently experiencing a particularly frightening economic crisis, with an enormous growth in unemployment in the European Union, and we have not seen the end of it yet”.

Philip Claeys also mentions the unemployment level in Europe, and argues that Europe already “has millions of unemployed people and an additional import of labour from outside the Union will only make the existing problems worse”. Further, the “European unemployment figure is 20 million, and still the Commission would like to import more immigrants. Might I, in fact, point out that the unemployment percentage among non-European immigrants is considerably higher than among the native people in the member states?”. Europe already has “a million unemployed immigrants, coupled with all the problems which go along with that. As more immigrants enter, these existing problems can only get worse”. One option is to “reach out for an easy solution in the short term by pleading in favour of an even greater immigration wave from outside Europe. Whilst this may seem like a good idea in theory, day-to-day reality in our big cities bears witness to the total failure of lax immigration policy over the past 30 years”. As these statements show, the high unemployment rate in Europe will, in his view, be worse with increased immigration. First, he argues that the immigration of labour will make the unemployment situation in Europe worse. Second, he argues that the situation will be worse because the unemployment rate amongst immigrants is higher than the European population. So he argues that more immigration would lead to more competition for Europeans on the jobs available, and second, to more unemployment as the immigrants also are in many cases without jobs.

The argumentation from Philip Claeys differs in some way from that of the representatives from Front National. The representatives from Front National focus more on European protectionism, that the jobs in Europe should be reserved for Europeans. This is not mentioned by any of the representatives from Vlaams Belang.

### **The Return Directive**

Frank Vanhecke argues that “the immigration problems that we have today are very serious indeed, but they are still manageable compared with what will descend on us in decades to come. When we look at it from this perspective, the measures provided for in this supposed Returns Directive are actually futile and are certainly insufficient”. This argumentation suggests that he sees the Return Directive as not enough to meet the challenges of immigration. This becomes even clearer when he argues that “we will need to do a great deal more than these half-hearted measures taking two steps forward and one step back to stem the illegal flow. However, because a small signal for a policy to return illegal migrants is better

than nothing at all, I voted for the Weber report but without enthusiasm”. To the debate about the directive in the European Parliament he explains that “the seriousness of the situation regarding the total lack of firm action against the scourge of the millions of illegal immigrants in Europe has become clear from the hysterical reactions to this Returns Directive on the part of politically correct left-wing opinion-formers”.

Furthermore, to the specific parts of the directive he says that “the Directive actually puts the two options – expulsion and regularisation – on more or less the same level, as though it were a case of a neutral choice, whereas the mass regularisations carried out in various Member States in recent years have acted as a massive pull factor and also placed a heavy burden on the other European countries”. Here he argues that one of the options the directive gives will act as a burden to the European states. To sum up his explanations, he says that “I wish this were a real returns directive, which would stop the pull factor for illegal immigrants once and for all, but unfortunately it is not. I am far from convinced that this will be even an initial small step in the right direction”.

Philip Claeys voted for a report on the Return Directive, and he says that it is not acceptable to let people gain rights from a situation of illegality. He argues that “many elements in the Directive are entirely without obligation. Having said that, the Directive offers some Member States the opportunity to detain illegal migrants for longer with a view to their deportation”. Further, “another positive provision is the five-year re-entry ban following a deportation to prevent them from coming into the rest of Europe. The immigration problem requires much more radical measures than those supported in this report, but it is a step in the right direction”. Philip Claeys seems positive towards the regulation in the directive that regulates detention and the re-entry ban, which are rules that can keep immigrants out of the society. He also mentions that this is not enough, but he also admits that this is a step in the right direction. This is also the conclusion from the arguments given by Frank Vanhecke, the directive is not enough but it is at least a starting point. The representatives seem to have the same attitudes towards the Return Directive as the representatives from Front National have. They see it as a starting point, but that is all. However, in this category the representatives from Vlaams Belang argue more detailed, more negatively and have more focus on stopping immigration in general.

## **Terrorism**

The mentioning of terrorism in the immigration debate is not widespread amongst the representatives from Vlaams Belang. However Koenraad Dillen gives one statement that can be put in this category, which is also mentioned under the Schengen category. He says “the Schengen area has been offering potential terrorists and criminals an ideal environment to carry out their criminal plans, often with impunity”. However, none of the representatives from Vlaams Belang argue, as Bruno Gollnisch does, that the primary cause of the terrorist threat in Europe is the influx of migrants groups who do not wish to integrate.

## **Economy**

The representatives from Vlaams Belang do not mention economy much in the immigration debates. They argue elsewhere that immigration has an economic cost, but not that much about the economic situation. However, Philip Claeys says he emphatically reject the assertion that only a new wave of immigration can guarantee the economic future of Europe and he wants to “point out that immigration is about far more than just figures and tables”. This means that he does not think immigration, or more immigration, is the solution to the economic challenges Europe is experiencing.

## **Consequences of immigration**

The consequences of immigration are mentioned under some of the other categories, such as the formation of more ghettos, de facto apartheid, violence and more unemployment.

The other consequences the representatives mention are put in this category.

As a consequence of immigration Philip Claeys mentions that “tuberculosis, a disease that, until recently, had completely, or nearly completely disappeared from Europe and that is now being imported again through mass migration”. Further, Koenraad Dillen explains that illegal immigration causes “many social problems in Europe”. Frank Vanhecke says that our Member States “today are already being affected by enormous problems as a result of the presence on our territory of millions of immigrants who cannot be assimilated”.

Philip Claeys argues that the level of “unemployment and crime among certain groups of immigrants” is “significantly higher than in the indigenous population”. Frank Vanhecke also connects immigrant to crimes, saying “this House remains positively blind to the disproportionately high level of crime among young immigrants and particularly young

Muslims, even though it is a phenomenon that is clearly prevalent in all European Member States. When explanations are given, they only refer to all kinds of socio-economic factors, while cultural elements are also clearly part of the mix, as is evidenced by the findings by Marion van San, the Dutch expert, on this subject matter". Here he specifies the problem with violence to the Muslim population, and he also says there is 'cultural elements' in the reason for this violence. By saying that the 'high level of crime' has cultural elements, one is talking down the culture and he distinguishes 'their culture' from 'our' just like we have seen before in this analysis. More than ever before, Frank Vanhecke argues (as we have seen in other categories), "we are having to be vigilant to preserve our European culture, our values and standards, which are increasingly coming under pressure due to the massive number of immigrants from other cultures".

All three representatives mention in a motion for resolution that "the policy of mass immigration in recent decades has led to major social problems such as the emergence of parallel societies in which unemployment, crime and Muslim fundamentalism are rampant". They further explain that "the massive presence of un-integrated immigrants in major conurbations is already causing significant social problems (higher average crime rates, growth of Islamic fundamentalism, ghettos, tendency for local population to move elsewhere, etc), and new waves of immigration would therefore be more likely to aggravate the existing problems than to solve them".

Koenraad Dillen expresses his views on the immigration situation in a long explanation, where he uses examples from Flanders and France to describe the effects of immigration. He says "I dare express the hope here that this House, concerned as it is about every form of xenophobia and intolerance, will once again organise a debate on a matter of topical and urgent importance, that matter being the explosive situation involving migrants in the districts of some major European cities". He further explains that "My country, Flanders, too, has been the scene of terror on the streets over the past few weeks, with gangs of North African immigrants giving full vent to their hatred towards our Western society and taking it out on public and private property. Whilst the violence was more limited in its extent than in France, where several people were killed, the politically correct left still prevents us from using the term *riffraff* or *scum – racaille* in French – and would prefer to shoot the messenger than address the problem in an environment without any taboos. Those problems are first and

foremost rooted in an immigration policy that has gone off the rails, in the formation of ghettos, the refusal to assimilate and an aggressive Islamic fundamentalism in the suburbs”.

Both parties mention several consequences of immigration to Europe and to the people of Europe. One can, however, argue that the representatives from Vlaams Belang ‘talk louder’ than the representatives from Front National, and is in a degree more negative in their description of immigrants and the consequences to Europe.

### **Freedom of expression**

The representatives from Vlaams Belang express in several documents their concern for the freedom of expression, mostly in regards to themselves and their stance in the immigration debate. According to Philip Claeys, freedom of expression ”must be absolute and must certainly cover political views even on controversial issues such as immigration and Islam”. Further, one is either “in favour of the free expression of opinion, and accepts all the consequences that this entails, or one is not”. He also says that a “legitimate political discourse against further mass-immigration and for a firm adjustment policy is being consciously bound up with extremism and violence”, and “criticism of the failed immigration and integration policy is always labelled as racism and so is criminalised”. Here we see that his concerns for the freedom of expression are connected to his own political stance. He feels his views on immigration are not accepted by others, but stigmatised as racism and extremism. He further says “People risk being prosecuted and convicted, not because of something they have done, but because of their opinions and the expression of those opinions. In this way the policy being pursued does not produce solutions to the problems, but the policy itself becomes part of the problem”.

Frank Vanhecke also gives his opinion arguing “when are European citizens going to be allowed to give their opinion on the disastrous immigration policy being shoved down their throats by the European mandarins?”. This suggests that he feels like there is no room for his opinions in the political debate. This is clearly the stance of Philip Claeys, who argues “Whilst it is acceptable to combat racism – and by racism I mean the specific incitement to or the use of violence – it is not acceptable to confuse this concept with legitimate public debate, such as opposition to mass immigration, opposition to Islamisation or the defence of national identity”. In almost every citation from the representatives they connect the freedom of expression to their own stance in the immigration debate.

Philip Claeys goes as far as saying that a Europe where the freedom of expression does not allow him to express his negative views on the immigration policy and on immigrants, is a danger to democracy. He says “Every opinion’ – and I quote *verbatim* from the report – ‘that could bring about illegal behavior, will from here on in be punishable in every European Member State’. This he interprets as “any deviation from the prevailing political discourse on immigration, national identity and Islamisation will be nipped in the bud”. It is clear that he feels struck by this report. The next thing he says is that “the spirit of Voltaire’s tolerance, so exquisitely expressed in the phrase ‘I do not agree with what you have to say, but I’ll defend to the death your right to say it’, is being desecrated by European officialdom. This Europe is far more dangerous than the imaginary ogre it claims to be fighting. This Europe is a danger to democracy”.

Frank Vanhecke exploits his speaking time to explain the situation in Belgium. He is arguing “Finally, a further objection regarding a matter close to my heart. In our own European countries, particularly my home country, Belgium, we are increasingly seeing muzzling laws that restrict freedom of expression and even introduce prison sentences for opinions constituting an offence, particularly in matters of immigration and Islamisation. I consider this a particularly worrying development and think that, in this regard, we must fight tooth and nail – including in this House, when we discuss human rights – to defend freedom of expression in our own EU Member States, too”.

The argumentation shows that the representatives are concerned about freedom of expression, but the only examples they give are regarding their own point of view in the immigration debate. In their view, they are not allowed to express their opinions on immigration as freely as they want to. The representatives from Front National do not mention the issue of freedom of expression in the immigration debate. This is likely to be related to the conviction of racism that Vlaams Blok (predecessor of Vlaams Belang) experienced in 2004.





## 7 Main findings

### **How do the representatives from Front National and Vlaams Belang argue in the immigration debate?**

The idea- and ideology analyses of the argumentation of the two parties has made this thesis able to study *how* the two parties argue and *what* they argue in the immigration debate in the European Parliament. In regards to the expectations of the analysis, the analysis shows that the representatives have less focus on the national situation than assumed. The representatives only mention France and Flanders/Belgium a few times. Jamin mentions that anti-immigration parties will address the root cause of the problem and it was expected that the representatives would argue radically, and that there is not middle way in the discussions. This kind of argumentation we see from both parties when it comes to FRONTEX and the Schengen Agreement. The root cause is the abolishment of internal borders and this has to be addressed. In other debates, the root cause is the immigration in it self and it has, according to the representatives from both parties, to be reduced or even stopped and reversed. The representatives also argue that what is suggested as a policy is not enough and argue other policies that should be in place.

It was also expected that the representatives would be active in the immigration debate. The overview of the number of documents that contains the word “immi” shows that they have been quite active. As I have not compared this with other representatives, I am not able to say if they are more or less active than others. However, the chapter about the European Parliament shows that the non-attached members are in general more active when it comes to written questions.

It is clear first of all, even though there never was any uncertainty, that Front National and Vlaams Belang are anti-immigration parties. It could also be suggested, from the theory and from the analysis, that both parties fit what Jupskås refers to as the ‘fourth wave’ of extreme right. First, both parties’ fit to what Mudde refers to as ‘new racism’ and its focus on the incompatibility of other groups as they distinguish people on the basis of their culture (Mudde 1995:211). They do not make references to race and especially Front National argue the importance of helping the developing world to develop. The differences in culture

between 'us' and 'them' are mentioned several times by representatives from both parties. One example is Carl Lang from Front National who says that it is more difficult for immigrants from Africa and Asia because they come from culture different to ours. Philip Claeys from Vlaams Belang argues that we must "emphasise personal responsibility for immigrants to adapt to our rules, our language, our standards and our values". Frank Vanhecke argues, "we have to be vigilant to preserve our European culture, our values and standards, which are coming under pressure due to the massive number of immigrants for other culture".

The representatives are not only concerned about the differences in culture but they also fear that the European population and culture will be gone or replaced with other cultures and people. As we saw in the theory chapter, this is a feature that is mention by Jupskås. The last argument from Frank Vanhecke also touches on this fear. This fear is especially clear for Front National that mentions that immigrants are to replace the European population. Bruno Gollnisch also mentions that if immigrants are taught in their own language, and we recruit teachers for them and respect and promote their culture, the result will be ghettoisation, blurring of identities and acculturation. We also see from the theory about the parties and from the arguments that the representatives are nationalists.

Rydgren mentions four reasons given by the anti-immigration parties to why immigrants are a 'problem'. The first reason, that immigrants are a threat to 'ethno-national identity' is discussed above. The second reason Rydgren mentions is that immigrants are "a major cause of criminality and social unrest" (Rydgren 2008:746), and both parties argue that this is the case. Philip Claeys from Vlaams Belang argues that the level of crime among certain groups of immigrants is higher than the indigenous population. Frank Vanhecke explains that there is a disproportionately high level of crime among young immigrants and he adds that this is particularly so for young Muslims. Carl Lang from Front National also mentions this, arguing that there is an explosion of ethnic violence, and islamification of our towns. The third reason Rydgren mentions is that immigrants are a cause of unemployment, and this we also see argued by both parties. Fernand Le Rachinel from Front National argues that immigration by a lack of manpower, when Europe already has over 20 million unemployed is to penalise European workers. Philip Claeys from Vlaams Belang argues that Europe already has millions of unemployed people, and an additional import of labour from outside the European

Union will make this problem worse. All three representatives from Vlaams Belang argue that the immigration policy has led to ‘parallel societies’ where unemployment is ‘rampant’.

The fourth reason why immigrants are a ‘problem’ in the eyes of anti-immigration parties is according to Rydgren that they are “abusers of the welfare state” (Rydgren 2008:746). Bruno Gollnisch from Front National gives an argumentation that fits this. He argues that “hundreds of thousands of legal and illegal immigrants enter every year” attracted by “the still too numerous social benefits and other rights offered” to them.

In the arguments used in the analysis we saw that the two parties differ from the majority of other representatives in the European Parliament. They have voted against proposals that the majority has voted for, such as the European Blue Card, and they are negative towards the report on the future of a common asylum system, which was voted for by the majority. We have also seen that the anti-immigration parties have been receiving negative reactions from both the European Union, such as the reaction to Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs entering the coalition government in 2000, and in the national political scene, such as the cordon sanitaire Vlaams Belang has experienced. This negative reception suggests that it would be difficult for the representatives from anti-immigration parties to cooperate with other political groups, because they are too different.

The two parties argue for the same things, and in many cases in the same way. Both parties argue that people abuse the asylum system, that immigration should not be used as a solution to the demographic challenge in Europe and that the Blue Card will lead to more immigration to Europe and a brain drain in third countries. Further both parties agree that there is not done enough in Europe to deal with the challenge of illegal immigration, that immigration has to stop and even be reversed. Policies that are positive for immigrants are, in their view, wrong. And so are any policies that can lead to increased immigration. Further, immigration to Europe should not be profitable. None of this comes as any surprise as both parties is anti-immigration parties. However, the analysis has showed that there are some differences to what the parties focus on and how they expresses themselves.

The greatest difference I found is in the categories of National self-determination, Internal borders and the Schengen Agreement and External borders and FRONTEX. All these categories are regarding the states control of their own borders and their own immigration

policy, and the interference of the European Union in this. The views of the two parties differ in some ways, as expected. A first place where we see a difference between the two parties is in the discussion about national self-determination. Front National gives more attention to this, and argues more strict that the member states should themselves be in control of their own immigration policies. A second place we see a difference, which could be seen in context to the first, is in the discussion of FRONTEX and the Schengen Agreement. We know from the theory that Vlaams Belang is positive to European cooperation and that the party sees this as a possibility for Flanders to separate from the Belgian state. Flanders will also have a smaller chance than France to manage without the open market that the European Union offers. This becomes clear from the discussion that the representatives from Vlaams Belang are more positive in their argumentation towards the Schengen Agreement and FRONTEX, than the representatives from Front National. This is of course a difference in degrees, Vlaams Belang is also negative to the Schengen Agreement, but in a lesser degree than Front National. This shows that the history and national situation affects the parties' argumentation and stance in the immigration debates.

A second difference is the national and European protectionism mentioned by Front National. The representatives from Front National argues that the jobs in Europe should be reserved for Europeans, and French jobs for the French, and argues more of a European protectionism than Vlaams Belang do. We saw in the theory chapter about Front National that this *national* protectionism has been a part of the party's policies since 1978, but here they also argue a *European* protectionism. Even though Vlaams Belang also has had slogan such as "Own people first", the representatives do not mention this protectionism as clear as the representatives from Front National do. The representatives from Front National seem more concerned with going back to a time when the member states controlled their own borders and policies, when there where no open internal borders or open market.

A third difference is that Vlaams Belang has great attention to the freedom of speech in the immigration debate, which is not mentioned by the representatives from Front National. As concluded earlier, this could have a connection to the conviction of racism that the former party, Vlaams Blok, experienced in 2004. Fourth, Front National argues that there is a connection between development in third countries and the immigration to Europe. They also argue that Europe should have a foreign policy that involves developing aid to these

countries. The representatives from Vlaams Belang do not mention this in the arguments used in the analysis.

We also see in the analysis that both parties seem to argue in a way that can attract more voters than the usual anti-immigration party voter. They do not say that immigration is bad per se, but they mention consequences of immigration that concern many people, such as the European population, violence, crime, terrorism and security.

### **What possibilities do they have to affect the immigration policies of the European Parliament, and what possibilities do they utilize?**

As mention in the introduction, this thesis has a second part, and that is to study the possibilities the two parties have to affect the immigration policies to the European Parliament. Since Front National and Vlaams Belang were not in any political group in the sixth parliamentary term (except for a limited time period) there are several shortcomings in their possibilities to have any direct impact on the policy outcomes and the agenda of the European Parliament. First of all, they are not able to be part of the Conference of Presidents. As the chapter 4.1.2 shows, this is where the majority of political issues are handled and they loose this chance to affect the policies. Second, they do not get to be a rapporteur, because the political groups delegate this position. Third, the political groups decide the issues that are to be discussed in the plenary sessions, which means that non-attached members have less of a chance to affect the agenda of the Parliament. As the theory chapter shows, a party is more likely to reach their goals if their representatives have joined any of the largest groups, which further shows the lack of possibility to reach their goals and to have any direct impact on the policy outcome when the representatives from Front National and Vlaams Belang are not members of any political group. Fourth, the leadership of the political groups “determines important issues such as the choice of the parliament’s president”, which non-attached members are not able to affect. Further, they also determine who gets what position in committees.

Representatives from Front National and Vlaams Belang are also restricted in their options of speaking in plenary sessions. The right to ask oral questions with an ensuing debate is limited to a committee, a political group or 40 representatives. This means that the representatives from Front National and Vlaams Belang, which is not 40 in numbers, are not able to use this

method to discuss their politics in the plenary sessions. However, if they gather representatives from the other anti-immigration parties and they are 40 all together, they are able to use this method. As we have seen in the theory, there were not 40 representatives from anti-immigration parties in the Sixth European Parliament, at least not belonging to the “community of parties” that Front National and Vlaams Belang seem to belong.

In the debate that follows this kind of questions, the speaking time is allocated so that the non-attached members get a speaking time, but less than the political groups. Written questions, however, can be asked by any single member and here the representatives from the two parties have the same possibility as representatives that are members of a political group to affect the agenda of the parliament. This is also the case for the “question time”, here the non-attached members has the same right as members of political groups.

The non-attached members also loose the economic side of joining a political group. There is economic support for non-attached members as well, as they get paid to be a representative, but they would have received more funding if they joined or created a political group. This economic loss of not being a member of a political group will have an effect on the parties’ capacity to campaign. On the other side, for some small anti-immigration parties with little resources, the funding received for being a representative in the European Parliament could be a reason in it self to stand for election. These limited possibilities to have a direct impact in the immigration policies of the European Parliament is also applicable for other small parties and representatives that are not members of a political group.

From this, one can conclude that the representatives from Front National and Vlaams Belang have little opportunity to directly affect the policy outcomes of the European Parliament. These limitations that follows non-attached members in the European Parliament was also what Startin finds as one of the main reason for the creation of the political group *Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty* in 2007. He concludes that

*“Certainly a principle motivation for the formation of ITS was undoubtedly the necessity for political survival, which could only really be obtained within the institutional framework of a political grouping”*

(Startin 2010:438)

The research question also asks what possibilities the two parties use to promote their politics and to affect the immigration policies of the European Parliament. The representatives use the options that they have; they use the explanation of vote, they hold speeches in plenary when they are allowed, and they ask the kind of questions they are allowed to ask. Further, as chapter 4.2 shows, they have also tried to form a political group during the sixth parliamentary term. The group *Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty* was created in 2007, but it was dissolved after only a couple of months because there were not enough members to fulfil the requirements.

Even though the parties do not have that many chances of directly affecting the immigration policies of the European Parliament, one could ask if they have affected it indirectly. This is not possible to answer with this thesis, but Art finds that anti-immigration parties have had an effect on the immigration policies of other parties even when they have not been in power themselves. From the theory we see that the immigration policy in the European Union and in European countries has been stricter in the last years. As the anti-immigration parties receive more support and more people is concerned with immigration, one could ask if this development affects the more moderate parties in the European Parliament and their immigration policies.





# 8 Concluding remarks

## 8.1 Summary

Since the late 1970 and the beginning of the 1980s Europe has seen an increase in the number of parties hostile towards immigration. There has also been a general development to a more strict immigration policy. The European Parliament, with its increasing law making power, has the possibility to affect the immigration policies of all of its member states, 27 in total. In this institution there has also been an increase in the number of anti-immigration parties. This master thesis has studied two anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament, which is a quite untouched territory. Much literature has been written on anti-immigration parties in general, but very little on these parties when they are elected into the European Parliament. One reason for this could be that, even though they have been growing in size and numbers, the parties are quite small in the European Union context. In the theory section we saw the definition of anti-immigration parties, their history, the four waves of far right parties after the Second World War and their ideology. There was also a short review of the existing research, both on the anti-immigration parties in general and on anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament. Further, after the method chapter, there was an introduction to the European Parliament, its power, composition, election and the possibilities elected representatives have to be heard about their politics.

In the analysis section, a type of idea- and ideology analysis was used to give the reader an overview of the arguments given by the representatives from the two parties in the Sixth European Parliament from 2004-2009. The different arguments were categorised into different categories, to be able to study the arguments more effectively. From the analysis the reader saw that the representatives were quite persistent in their arguments. And that they are, in sum, against everything that, in their view, will lead to more immigration. Further, they have a very negative view on the immigration situation of Europe today, and argue that the immigration should stop and even be reversed. This is of course not surprising after reading about their ideology, but this gives an overview of the actual arguments they use in their fight against immigration. The reader also saw that there are differences between the two parties,

especially in regards to the protection of the internal borders and the control of own immigration policy.

The analysis also shows that according to the rules of the European Parliament and the number of representatives from these two parties, they do not play any great role in shaping the immigration policy of the European Union. They could in theory have a greater chance of having any impact if they were a political group. If they join a political group, they could get more speaking time, more financial support and be able in a greater way to affect the agenda of the Parliament. However, the history shows that they have not been able to form a political group lasting for longer than a short period.

## **8.2 Suggestions for further research**

This master thesis has tried to fill a hole in the existing research about anti-immigration parties in the European Parliament. There are several shortcomings of this thesis that can be filled by further research. It could have been interesting to do the same kind of analysis of the other anti-immigration parties in the Sixth European Parliament. This could have given a clearer picture of the arguments given by such parties in regards to immigration and to see if they argue in the same way, and if there is enough ideological similarities to form a political group. Further, after the enlargement to Eastern Europe in 2007 there are now more parties that could be characterised as anti-immigration parties. Will they now be able to form a political group? And if they do, it would be interesting to see if this will have any effect on the immigration policies of the European Parliament. In relation to how anti-immigration parties argue, it would be interesting to see if there are many similarities between the anti-immigration parties from East and Western Europe. It would also be interesting to interview, both qualitative and quantitative, both parliamentarians from anti-immigration parties and leaders of other groups in the European Parliament and the presidency to get a clearer picture of how the representatives behave in the Parliament and in committees, and to see how the other representatives is affected by the presence of representatives from anti-immigration parties.

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# Appendix

## 1 Explanation of terms

### The Return Directive

The Commission adopted a proposal for a new directive on “common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third country nationals” in 2005 (Acosta 2009: 22, Baldaccini 2009:1). It took further three years of negotiation before an agreement was met, and this was the first time the co-decision was used in the area of immigration (Baldaccini 2009:1). The text was adopted with 369 representatives voting for it, 197 against and 106 were absent (Acosta 2009:37). The background for the directive was to “ensure that return and removal were facilitated and cooperation in this area greatly enhanced by a community measure” (Baldaccini 2009:2). The directive “applies to third country nationals staying illegally in the territory of a Member State”. It gives Member States the authority, but it is also a requirement, to exclude third country nationals that “are refused entry, or stopped in connection with an irregular crossing of the “ borders of a member state and that were no longer “allowed to stay in the Member State” (ibid.:3). This means that the decision to return immigrants also denies the returned person to re-enter any of the member states in a period of no longer than five years (ibid.:9, 10, Giupponi 2009:9).

If a member state does not want to return an illegal immigrant, it has to “regularise the status of that immigrant” based on “compassionate, humanitarian or other reasons” (Baldaccini 2009:6). Immigrants that are “removed for criminal law reasons” and those that are family members of citizens of the Union are not part of the scope of the directive. Family members that meet the conditions for residence “cannot be expelled because they have entered illegally or because their visa has expired” (ibid.:4). When it is decided that a person has to leave under this directive, the person will be given, “as a norm”, a time period to leave the member state voluntarily. If this does not happen, there are measures for forced return (ibid.:5). The period of voluntary return is between seven and 30 days (ibid.:8, Giupponi 2009:9). The directive also states that people have the right to appeal the decision of return, removal and entry ban (Baldaccini 2009:11). They are also entitled to free legal aid in “accordance with relevant national rules on legal aid” and the member states must “ensure emergency health care, and essential treatment of illness, access to basic education for minors, and special need

for vulnerable people” (ibid.:12). The directive further states that, *in particular*, when “there is a risk of absconding” or if the “person concerned avoids or hampers the removal process”, the member states can keep illegal immigrants in detention (Baldaccini 2009:13) for six to 18 months (Giupponi 2009:9).

### **The European Union Blue Card**

In May 2009 the Council of the European Union adopted the directive regarding the Blue Card Scheme (Kancs and Ciaian 2010:225), and together with the single permit directive from 2011 it “establish the EU Blue Card Scheme” (EU Blue Card Network n.d.). The Blue Card workers visa programme is an initiative from the European Union to “attract highly-skilled labour to Europe” (Gümüs 2010:435) with a fast track procedure for “issuing a special residence and work permit” (Kancs and Ciaian 2010:225). The central principle of the Blue Card is the “enhanced freedom of access to labour markets” (Gümüs 2010:437), and the holders of this visa will get “a series of socio-economic rights and favourable conditions for family reunification and movement across the EU” (ibid.:441). The visa last for one to four years, but there is a possibility for renewing the visa (ibid.). The people that have this visa also get “working and salary conditions equal to nationals” (EU Blue Card Network n.d), meaning that the salary conditions given to Blue Card holders are dependent on which country they apply to. The admission requirements and rights granted also vary from member state to member state (Cerna 2013:193).

### **The Schengen Agreement**

The general idea of the Schengen Agreement and the Schengen Convention (1990) that implemented it (Apap and Carrera 2004:399) is to abolish the border controls between member states. The first part of the Schengen Agreement was signed in 1985, but did not come into force until ten years later, in 1995 (Guiraudon 2000:256). The first agreement came only two years before the Single European Act came into effect. The Single European Act established that the European Union should be “an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons and capital is ensured” (Convey and Kupiszewski 1995:942). The first countries that agreed to abolish the border controls were France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg (the Benelux countries) (Boswell 2003:621). In 1987 the Italian government “made a formal request to join” and Denmark requested the same year to join “as an observer” (Philip 1991:44). Norway and Iceland became part of the Schengen Agreement by the Nordic Passport Union (Guiraudon

2000:255). The Schengen Accords were formalised in 1995 for seven of the current 15 members of the European Union (Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain). However, the same year France decided to keep the border controls with the other Schengen states, because of illegal immigration and trafficking in drugs. Spain and France also agreed to “reinstate their common borders” (Convey and Kupiszewski 1995:940). The Schengen Agreement has its origins in the Fontainebleau Council of the European Communities in June 1984, where the representatives adopted “the principle of abolishing police and customs formalities at the interior frontiers of the Community area” (ibid.: 942). The Schengen convention became part of the “EU machinery” in 1999 when the Amsterdam treaty became effective. The “section dealing with the Schengen border acquis was incorporated within the first pillar” of the European Union. Further, “a protocol annexed to the Amsterdam Treaty finally integrated the Schengen acquis into the framework of the European Union, including the decisions and declarations adopted by the executive committee established by the 1990 convention” (Apap and Carrera 2004:400). The most relevant article in the Schengen Convention is article 2.2. This article has the articles 62.1 and 64 of the EC treaty “as its legal basis”. According to the first paragraph of article 2.2, there shall not be any checks on a person crossing internal borders.

The second paragraph of article 2.2 mentions the first exception from this stating that after a member state has conferred with the other Schengen states, it can a reinstate the border controls at its internal borders when “public policy or national security so require”. In situations where the state sees it as necessary to act instantly and an “extreme emergency” exists, the state can reinstate controls at the internal borders without consulting the other contracting parties. Apap and Carrera find that the use of this exception “has not been so much exceptional as quite common”. Further, they argue that the exceptions are mostly used for protests and demonstration, such as on European Council meetings (Apap and Carrera 2004:400-403).

## **FRONTEX**

FRONTEX is the European Union body that is making “operational the EU border management strategy”. It was “established by the Council Regulation (EC) 2007/2004” on 26 October 2004, and its headquarter is placed in Warsaw. The formal legal basis of FRONTEX is the articles 62.2 (Papastavridis 2010:77) and 66 of the European Community Treaty on “Visas, Asylum, Immigration and other policies related to Free Movement of persons”. It is

therefore an institution of the first pillar<sup>11</sup> (Carrera 2007:17). The main goal of FRONTEX is to “coordinate risk analysis based joint operations which are systemically managed and cost effective (Carrera 2007:8-9). Further, FRONTEX also intends to be a “key player in the consolidation, practical implementation and gradual expansion of the EU Integrated Border Management System” (Carrera 2007:9). Vaughan - Williams (2008) finds that the main role of FRONTEX is to “promote a pan European model of integrated border security” and this pan European model consists of three different parts. The first part “involves the exchange of information and co-operation between member states on issues relating to immigration and repatriation “. The second part “incorporates border and customs control, focusing on surveillance, border checks and risk analysis”. The last part contains “co-operation between border guards, customs and police” in states other than the member states (Vaughan - Williams 2008:65).

According to the Council Regulation 2007/2004, the Member States are responsible for the “control and surveillance of external borders”, (Papastavridis 2010:77, Carrera 2007:9), and FRONTEX only can act after being requested by a member state. However, it can also take own “initiative for joint operations and pilot projects” when agreement is reached by the other member states being concerned (Carrera 2007:9). Further, the member states are responsible for the tools and manpower for the operations. Even though the member states are not *obliged* to participate, the FRONTEX operations are dependent on the solidarity of the member states (Carrera 2007:10). FRONTEX may employ the Rapid Border Intervention Team in situations where a member state is “faced with an excessive flow of illegal immigrants”. In these situations, the member states are obliged to participate under what is sometimes referred to as “compulsory solidarity” (Papastavridis 2010:77-78).

The decision making process of FRONTEX has four phases. In the first phase, a risk analysis of the situation is carried out (Carrera 2007:10). The risk analysis is performed by the Head of the Risk Analysis Unit (RAU) (ibid.), which is composed of “experienced border guard officials and experts with customs background” (ibid.:15). The risk analysis is the basis for the FRONTEX operations, and they are secret. As a result of this, “the very source of legitimising the operation can not be at all contested, reviewed and in the end made democratically accountable” (ibid.:14). The next phase is the “preparation of operational

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<sup>11</sup> The pillars system of the European Union is explained in chapter 4.3

initiative”, and in the third phase the “preparation of operation plan and implementation” is carried out. Lastly, there is an evaluation of the operation, and the situation is followed up (ibid.:10). The Management Board, which consists of “operational heads of national services responsible for border guard management or their representatives as well as representatives of the Commission”, adopts the “strategic guidelines” of FRONTEX (Papastavridis 2010:77).

## **2 Sources to direct quotes in the analysis**

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#### **Asylum**

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Explanation of vote on report by Antonio Masip Hidalgo 7 May 2009, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel  
Explanation of vote on report by Giusto Catania 10 March 2009, Carl Lang  
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Explanation of vote on report by Martine Roure 5 February 2009, Bruno Gollnisch  
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#### **Demography**

Debate 22 April 2009 Bruno Gollnisch (debate on Credit Rating Agencies - Reporting and documentation requirements in the case of merger and divisions - Insurance and reinsurance (Solvency II))  
Explanation of vote (report not mentioned) 17 November 2004, Bruno Gollnisch  
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#### **Stop and reverse**

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 15 January 2009, Carl Lang  
Explanation of vote on report by Javier Moreno Sánchez 18 December 2008, Bruno Gollnisch  
Debate 25 October 2006, Bruno Gollnisch (on the results of the informal summit of heads of state and government)  
Explanation of vote on report by Coelho 25 October 2006, Bruno Gollnisch  
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Explanation of vote on report by Catania 17 January 2006, Carl Lang  
Explanation of vote on report by Claudio Fava 4 February 2009, Carl Lang  
Explanation of vote on report by Manfred Weber 18 June 2008, Carl Lang  
Explanation of vote on motions for resolutions (Common immigration policy) 28 September 2006, Marine Le Pen  
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### **Integration and assimilation**

Explanation of vote on report by Hannu Takkula 2 April 2009, Bruno Gollnisch  
Explanation of vote on report by Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou 24 October 2006, Bruno Gollnisch  
Explanation of vote on report by Cristiana Muscardini 24 March 2009, Lydia Schenardi  
Explanation of vote on report (author not mentioned) 9 June 2005, Marine Le Pen  
Explanation of vote on report by Lambrinidis 6 July 2006, Carl Lang  
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### **Situation in third country**

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 12 March 2009, Bruno Gollnisch  
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Explanation of vote on report by Giusto Catania 10 March 2009, Carl Lang  
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### **National self-determination**

Explanation of vote on report by Giusto Catania 10 March 2009, Bruno Gollnisch  
Explanation of vote on report by Jean Lambert 9 July 2008, Bruno Gollnisch  
Explanation of vote on report by Kudrycka 14 December 2006, Bruno Gollnisch  
Debates 25 October 2006, Bruno Gollnisch (debate on results of the informal summit of heads of state and government)  
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Explanation of vote (on what not mentioned) 30 November 2006, Lydia Schenardi

### **Illegal employment**

Explanation of vote on report by Claudio Fava 19 February 2009, Bruno Gollnisch  
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### **Discrimination**

Explanation of vote on report by Martine Roure 5 February 2009, Bruno Gollnisch  
Explanation of vote on report by Patrick Gaubert 20 November 2008, Bruno Gollnisch  
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Explanation of vote on report by Ždanoka 14 June 2006, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Marielle De Sarnez 21 October 2008, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel

### **External Borders and FRONTEX**

Explanation of vote on report by Javier Moreno Sánchez 18 December 2008, Bruno Gollnisch

Explanation of vote on report by Javier Moreno Sánchez 18 December 2008, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel

Debates 27 September 2006 Jean-Marie Le Pen (on Freedom, security and justice – Immigration)

Debates 26 September 2007 Marine Le Pen Immigration (on Legal migration - Policy priorities in the fight against illegal immigration of third-country nationals)

### **Internal borders and the Schengen Agreement**

Explanation of vote on report by Musotto 15 March 2007, Bruno Gollnisch

Explanation of vote on report by Coelho 25 October 2006 Bruno Gollnisch

Explanation of vote on report by Javier Moreno Sánchez 18 December 2008, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel

Explanation of vote on report by Carlos Coelho 24 September 2008, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel

Debates 26 September 2007, Marine Le Pen (on Legal migration, Policy priorities in the fight against illegal immigration of third-country nationals)

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Debates 27 September 2006, Jean-Marie Le Pen (on Freedom, security and justice – Immigration)

Explanation of vote on report by Javier Moreno Sánchez 18 December 2008, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel

Parliamentary question 5 October 2007 Carl Lang

### **The Blue Card and Brain Drain**

Debates 16 December 2008, Bruno Gollnisch (on Outcome of the European Council on 11-12 December 2008 - French Presidency's term of office)

Explanation of vote on report by Ewa Klamt 20 November 2008, Bruno Gollnisch

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Explanation of vote on report by Moreno Sánchez 26 September 2007, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Manfred Weber 18 June 2008, Marine Le Pen

Explanation of vote on report by Ewa Klamt 20 November 2008, Fernand Le Rachinel

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## **Unemployment**

Explanation of vote on report by Simon Busuttil 22 April 2009, Carl Lang and Fernand Le Rachinel

Explanation of vote on report by Claudio Fava 4 February 2009, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Jan Andersson 22 October 2008, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Anne Van Lancker 20 May 2008, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Gruber report 26 September 2007, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Kósáné Kovács 4 April 2006, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Françoise Castex 21 February 2008, Fernand Le Rachinel

## **The Return Directive**

Explanation of vote on report by Manfred Weber 18 June 2008, Bruno Gollnisch

Explanation of vote on report by Manfred Weber 18 June 2008, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Manfred Weber 18 June 2008 Marine Le Pen

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## **Terrorism**

Explanation of vote on report by Gérard Deprez 19 February 2008, Bruno Gollnisch

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 31 January 2008, Bruno Gollnisch

## **Economy**

Explanation of vote on report by Cottigny 15 March 2006, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Glenis Willmott 15 January 2008, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Elizabeth Lynne 15 November 2007, Carl Lang

## **Consequences of immigration**

Explanation of vote on report by Gabriele Stauner 20 November 2008, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 5 June 2008, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Gruber 26 September 2007, Carl Lang

Explanation of vote on report by Lambrinidis 6 July 2006, Carl Lang

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Explanation of vote on report by Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou 17 June 2008, Bruno Gollnisch

Explanation of vote on report by Olle Schmidt 9 July 2008, Bruno Gollnisch

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## **Vlaams Belang**

### **Asylum**

Explanation of vote on report by Giusto Catania 10 March 2009, Philip Claeys

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### **Demography**

Explanation of vote on report by Simon Busuttil 22 April 2009, Philip Claeys

Explanation of vote on report by Françoise Castex 21 February 2008, Philip Claeys



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Explanation of vote on report by Gruber 26 September 2007, Frank Vanhecke

Debates 5 April 2006 Philip Claeys (on Results of the European Council - Lisbon Strategy)

### **Stop and reverse**

Debates 23 October 2006, Koenraad Dillen (on Establishment, operation and use of SIS II (regulation) – Establishment, operation and use of SIS II (decision) – Access to SIS II by the services responsible for issuing vehicle registration certificates)

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 28 September 2006, Koenraad Dillen

Debate 17 June 2008, Frank Vanhecke (on Common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals)

Explanation of vote on report by Carlos Coelho 14 January 2009, Frank Vanhecke

Debates 6 July 2006, Koenraad Dillen (on Development and migration)

Explanation of vote on report by Martens 25 October 2007, Frank Vanhecke

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 25 September 2008, Frank Vanhecke

### **Integration and assimilation**

Explanation of vote on report by Ždanoka 14 June 2006, Philip Claeys

Explanation of vote on report 8 June 2005, Philip Claeys

Debate 7 September 2005, Philip Claeys (on Liberty and security)

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 28 September 2006, Koenraad Dillen

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Explanation of vote on report by Pál Schmitt 2 April 2008, Frank Vanhecke

Explanation of vote on report Vasco Graça Moura 24 March 2009, Frank Vanhecke

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Explanation of vote on report (author not mentioned) 26 October 2005, Philip Claeys

### **Situation in third country**

Explanation of vote on report by Deprez 26 April 2007, Koenraad Dillen

### **National self-determination**

Explanation of vote on report by Adina-Ioana Vălean 2 April 2009, Philip Claeys

Explanation of vote on report by Klich 21 June 2007, Frank Vanhecke

### **Illegal employment**

Debates 3 February 2009, Philip Claeys (on Sanctions against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals)

Explanation of vote on report by Claudio Fava 4 February 2009, Philip Claeys

## **Discrimination**

Explanation of vote on report by Lambrinidis 6 July 2006, Frank Vanhecke  
Debate 27 September 2007, Philip Claeys (on Equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin)  
Explanation of vote (on what not mentioned) 8 June 2005, Philip Claeys  
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## **External borders and FRONTEX**

Debate 13 January 2009, Philip Claeys (on Security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents)  
Debates 17 December 2008, Philip Claeys (on Evaluation and future development of FRONTEX EUROSUR)  
Explanation of vote on report by Javier Moreno Sánchez 18 December 2008, Philip Claeys  
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Explanation of vote on report by Javier Moreno Sánchez 18 December 2008, Frank Vanhecke  
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Parliamentary question 4 August 2008, Frank Vanhecke

## **Intern borders and Schengen Agreement**

Explanation of vote on report by Roselyne Lefrançois 23 September 2008, Koenraad Dillen  
Debates 13 November 2007, Koenraad Dillen (on Application of the Schengen acquis - Application of the Schengen acquis in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia)  
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Explanation of vote on report by Michael Cashman 31 January 2008, Frank Vanhecke  
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## **The Blue Card and Brain Drain**

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Explanation of vote on report by Ewa Klamt 20 November 2008, Philip Claeys  
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Explanation of vote on report by Simon Busuttil 22 April 2009, Philip Claeys  
Debates 6 July 2006, Koenraad Dillen (on Development and migration)  
Explanation of vote on report by Maria Martens 24 March 2009, Koenraad Dillen  
Explanation of vote on report by Martens 25 October 2007, Koenraad Dillen  
Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 4 September 2008, Frank Vanhecke  
Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 25 September 2008, Frank Vanhecke

## **Unemployment**

Debates 5 May 2009, Frank Vanhecke (on Preparation of the European Council (18-19 June 2009))

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 25 March 2009, Philip Claeyns

Debates 19 November 2008, Philip Claeyns (on Demographic tendencies - Economic and social impacts)

Explanation of vote on report by Françoise Castex 21 February 2008, Philip Claeyns

## **The Return Directive**

Explanation of vote on report by Manfred Weber 18 June 2008, Frank Vanhecke

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Explanation of vote on report by Manfred Weber 18 June 2008, Philip Claeyns

## **Terrorism**

Explanation of vote on report by Roselyne Lefrançois 23 September 2008, Koenraad Dillen

## **Economy**

Explanation of vote on report by Gruber 26 September 2007, Philip Claeyns

## **Consequences of immigration**

Debates 23 April 2009, Philip Claeyns (on Rare diseases)

Explanation of vote on report by Maria Martens 24 March 2009, Koenraad Dillen

Debates 26 October 2005, Frank Vanhecke (on Preparation for the next informal European Council)

Explanation of vote (on what not mentioned) 9 June 2005, Philip Claeyns

Explanation of vote on report by Batzeli 21 June 2007, Frank Vanhecke

Explanation of vote on report by Gruber 26 September 2007, Frank Vanhecke

Motion for resolution 6 January 2009 by Philip Claeyns, Frank Vanhecke and Koenraad Dillen (Motion for a European Parliament resolution on holding a referendum on the European Union's immigration and asylum policy)

Motion for resolution 1 September 2006 by Philip Claeyns, Frank Vanhecke and Koenraad Dillen (Motion for a European Parliament resolution on organising a European multidisciplinary conference on demographics, the ageing population and European identity)

Debates 14 November 2005, Koenraad Dillen (One-minute speeches on matters of political importance)

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## **Freedom of expression**

Explanation of vote on report by Stavros Lambrinidis 26 March 2009, Philip Claeyns

Explanation of vote on report by Giusto Catania 14 January 2009, Philip Claeyns

Explanation of vote on motion for resolution 13 December 2007, Philip Claeyns

Debates 11 December 2007, Philip Claeyns (on Annual report of the European Union on Human Rights)

Debates 11 March 2008, Frank Vanhecke (on Annual policy strategy 2009)  
Explanation of vote on report Martine Roure 29 November 2007, Philip Claeys  
Explanation of vote on report by Roure 21 June 2007, Philip Claeys  
Debates 3 September 2008, Frank Vanhecke (on Evaluation of EU sanctions as part of the  
EU's actions and policies in the area of human rights)