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Revolution of the Reformists? The impact of Euroscepticism on social democracy in the European Union

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REVOLUTION OF THE REFORMISTS?

THE IMPACT OF EUROSCEPTICISM ON SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

A CASE STUDY OF THE NETHERLANDS

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Abstract

Since 1918, three waves of social democracy have been identified. In order to address societal challenges, each wave of social democracy highlights its adaptation to the political reality during each time. Once enjoying over 40% of the voter shares, social democratic parties have fallen to below 20% or less of the voter shares across Europe. As social democracy has been declining in the recent decades, contagious Euroscepticism explains the causal mechanism for this trend demonstrating that centre-left parties are more susceptible for economic and cultural Eurosceptic arguments from both extreme-left and extreme-right political parties, whereas centre-right parties are only susceptible to cultural Eurosceptic arguments from extreme-right political parties. This thesis provides a qualitative in-depth analysis of contagious Euroscepticism by assessing the trajectory of social democracy in West European member states. As it has not been an exception to the trend of social democratic decline, the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA) serves as a representational case for social democracy in West European member states. Drawn on historical institutionalism, this thesis argues that Euroscepticism has not led to a fourth wave of social democracy in the EU as it did not shift to revolutionary Eurosceptic approaches and maintained its reformist approach. Subsequently, this thesis empirically demonstrates that the PvdA has not shifted from its original reformist approach to a revolutionary Eurosceptic approach in the last decade, while Euroscepticism is an increasing embedded and persistent phenomenon within the European integration process.

To my beloved sister and parents, without whom it would all have remained a dream

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1. Introduction

On the 23rd of June 2016, the EU witnessed something that was unthinkable of up until then. The UK held a referendum regarding Brexit with the question whether it should leave or remain in the Union. A simple majority of 51.9% voted in favour of Brexit for the UK to leave the EU (Uberoi, 2016). This was not only a huge controversy within the Union, but also sparked reactions all across the world at that time from, among others, the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Managing Director of the IMF Christine Lagarde (BBC, 2016). Even though the referendum was not binding (Siddique, 2016), it demonstrated a rather legitimate popular will of the people with a turnout of 72.2% (Uberoi, 2016). Earlier in 2015, the Conservative Party proposed the EU Referendum Act to accommodate the Eurosceptics within its ranks (Watt & Mason, 2015). What followed was a political debacle in the UK as the majority of the electorate in Northern Ireland voted to remain in the EU hampering the Brexit negotiations (BBC, 2018). By the time the UK formally managed to leave the EU on January 31st of 2020, the Conservative Party went through three leadership changes (Stewart et al., 2016; BBC, 2019; Stewart, 2019). This historical moment is arguably the climax of Euroscepticism in the EU as no other member state has ever left the Union since its establishment.

Although the outcome of the referendum was controversial within the EU, Brexit was not a complete coincidence as the phenomenon of Euroscepticism originated in the UK. Rooted in British cultural, political, and economic differences from the European continent, it views the France-German dominated continent as the ‘other’ (George, 2000). Used for the first time as early as in the 1980s, the term Euroscepticism was inseparable from the public debate regarding European integration and was present among both the Labour and Conservative parties (Forster, 2002). Gaining more attention over time both politically and academically, the discourse of Euroscepticism gradually progressed towards a broader conceptualisation (Harmsen & Spiering, 2004). A pioneer in this field, Paul Taggart (1998) initially defined Euroscepticism as an “encompassing term” that “expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration” (p. 366).

In the same decade, empirical evidence demonstrates that social democracy in the EU has been in an electoral decline, with almost all social democratic parties gaining their lowest levels of support that they had since 1918, or 1945 for postwar democracies, or 1989 for new democracies after the fall of communism (Benedetto et al., 2020). The social democratic influence has long been a major contributor to the development of European welfare states along Christian democracy and liberalism (Fanning, 2021). Considered as the mainstream ideological families (Kriesi, 2007), the representing political parties have been putting forward European integration from the ideological centre-left, centre, and centre-right (Hooghe & Marks, 2009). However, while empirical evidence demonstrates a major electoral decline of social democracy, Christian democracy and liberalism do not seem to suffer such a decline. This trend is described as contagious Euroscepticism (Meijers, 2017). Many scholarly

work has focussed on the effects of Euroscepticism on centre-right parties (Benedetto et al., 2020), however, an in-depth assessment of the centre-left parties regarding Euroscepticism remains underdeveloped. Derived from this research gap, the question central to this thesis is:

What is the impact of Euroscepticism on social democracy in West European member states?

With this academic inquiry, I attempt to provide an in-depth study of the relationship between Euroscepticism as independent variable and social democracy in the EU as dependent variable. However, multiple scholars point out to the different national contexts as it remains crucial to understand various domestic legislative structures through which each member state responds to European integration (Harmsen & Spiering, 2004; Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2024). Additionally, the historical and institutional development of social democracy in West European countries since 1918 differs significantly from social democracy in postwar democracies since 1945 and new democracies since 1989 (Benedetto et al., 2020). Therefore, the research question provides an initial demarcation of this study.

2. Literature Chapter

In this chapter, I elaborate on the concepts of social democracy (in relation to), the European Union, European integration and Euroscepticism in an as much as possible chronological order. As previously mentioned, Euroscepticism is the independent variable in this study. Therefore, I am not interested in the causes of Euroscepticism. Rather, I assume the phenomenon of Euroscepticism as presented by Usherwood and Startin (2013) who argue that Euroscepticism is an “increasingly embedded and persistent phenomenon within the integration process” drawn on the path-dependency theory (p. 14). Derived from the rational school of thought of historical institutionalism, this theory predicts a ‘path’ in terms of inevitable outcomes as ‘dependency’ on earlier taken decisions, accounting for the historical structures of institutions (Trouvé et al., 2010). As such, I discuss a variety of mechanism that provide explanations for the dynamics of European integration versus Euroscepticism in relation to the institution of social democracy as an ideology, with particular focus on social democratic parties in West European member states. Subsequently, towards the end of this chapter, I narrow down to suitable theoretical approaches in order to kick-off the premise in the next chapter.

2.1 Collectivism, Liberalism, and the Welfare state

From an historical perspective, social democracy together with Christian democracy and liberalism form the ideological trinity of the European political landscape, emerging from the conflicts between “Protestantism and Catholicism since the Reformation, and between socialism and capitalism

since the Industrial Revolution” (Fanning, 2021, p2).¹ In essence, despite their different means and priorities, all of these three ideologies attempted to address solutions for emerging societal challenges through state intervention and have conflicted and cooperated over time (Fanning, 2021).

Deep in the 19th century, socialism was both intellectually and politically conflicting with liberalism during the decline of laissez-faire characterised by increased poverty, crime, and social control (Dahl, 1977; Hartwell, 2017).² In response, Christianity through the Catholic Church and under pressure from the Enlightenment offered a political “third way alternative” to societal challenges with its papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 (transl. ‘Of New Things’), acknowledging “the spirit of revolutionary change” in political and economic terms, and recognising the unjust “misery and wretchedness pressing on the working classes” (Fanning, 2021, p. 77). This was the Church’s equivalent to Karl Marx’ and Friederich Engels’ *The Communist Manifesto* and Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* (Fanning, 2021).

Identifying three waves of social democracy in their empirical study, Benedetto et al. (2020) described the first wave as socialism converging with the liberal democratic system during which most “social democratic parties broke from revolutionary politics” for reformatory social policies “via a parliamentary route” (p. 929). In the meanwhile, the working class became electorally significant towards the end of the Great War in 1918 (Fanning, 2021). Fanning (2021) further explains how social democracy is historically “built on a welfare system that had been delivered by the Church in rudimentary form of for centuries on behalf of the state” (p. 125). On the other side during the interbellum, totalitarianism including fascism was gradually establishing in Spain, Portugal, Germany, and Italy. It enjoyed legitimacy derived from the corporate authoritarianism idea through top-down patriarchal structures that was proposed by the Catholic Church in 1891 and 1931, based on collectivism and family rights (Fanning, 2021). This development resulted in WWII. During wartime UK, while Winston Churchill in his speech described the idea of the welfare state as social security provided for its citizens ‘from the cradle to the grave’ in 1943 (Fanning, 2021), Friederich Hayek (1944) argued a year later that socialism had paved the way for the success of Nazis in Germany by intellectually weakening the desire for liberty and subsequently concluded that collectivism leads to tyranny, exposing the conflict between a planned society and a free society (Orwell, 1944; Fanning, 2021). Nonetheless, the destructions of WWII were already set in motion.

2.2 From Traditional to Mainstream

As the European continent was rebuilding from its ashes after witnessing the horrors of totalitarianism, the “appetite” for a welfare state was “tangible” in some West European countries by

¹ For an extensive assessment of the ideological trinity and its legacy, see Bryan Fanning (2021) *Three Roads to the Welfare State: Liberalism, Social Democracy and Christian Democracy*

² For an extensive assessment of social, economic, and political circumstances during laissez-faire, see Tove Stand Dahl (1971) *State Intervention and Social Control in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, and Ronald Max Hartwell (2017) *The Industrial Revolution and Economic Growth*

1945 (Fanning, 2021, p. 126). Introduced by German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer in 1949, Christian democracy established *zentrum* (centre) politics mixing the Catholic ideas of collectivism with liberal economies as an “antidote to what were perceived as the causes of totalitarianism” (Fanning, 2021, p. 184). In the decade after the war, “most social democratic parties attempted to reach beyond their traditional working class base, accepting that social-democratic voting industrial workers were unlikely to generate a majority,” possibly as a direct result of WWII. Hence, many social democrats then started to focus on “a social market (an objective shared with Christian democrats), building a welfare state, nationalising natural monopolies, macroeconomic demand management, and in later years, liberal social policies on divorce and gender equality” (Benedetto et al., 2020, p. 930-931).

In the same decade, rational choice intellect Anthony Downs (1957) introduced the spatial theory in which he argues that political parties are rational actors seeking to secure as many as votes as possible. In extent, Kirchheimer (1966) argued that “under the emerging conditions of mass consumption, the establishment of the welfare state, the blurring class lines and the increasing importance of the middle class, old ‘mass integration parties’ would be under pressure to transform itself into catch all parties” (Colomé & Merkel, 1992, p. 13). Empirical evidence has confirmed that political parties indeed modify their stances on policy matters when their political environment undergoes shifts (Adams, 2012). Benedetto et al. (2020) further argued that “these catch-all parties downgraded class-based politics in favour of policies that appealed to public-sector employees, urban professionals, and agricultural labourers” (p. 931). Henceforth, while Christian democrats dominated the European political landscape in the 1950s and early 1960s (Fanning, 2021), social democratic parties enjoyed the height of their support in the late 1960s and 1970s (Benedetto et al., 2020).

2.3 European Integration

Around the same time, during the rise of the Cold War, the European Economic Community (EEC) preceding the EU was established in 1957. Initially forming a customs union between the founding member states of The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, France, and Italy (Verdun et al., 2023), the Union aimed to ensure the free movement of goods, labour, and capital according to the free market principles of liberalism (Fanning, 2021), while Portugal and Spain remained under authoritarian and totalitarian control.

Later in the 1970s and 1980s, the Community increased its influence by expanding its policies and through a variety of enlargement rounds including the UK, Ireland, and Denmark, and later Spain and Portugal, ensuring its ability to respond to external economic challenges while maintaining the European integration process (Verdun et al., 2023). Many international relations (IR) scholars have assessed the purpose of the Union as preventing another violent conflict on the European continent through political and economic cooperation by forming a capitalist bloc in the West against the communist threat from the East (Marsh & Mackenstein, 2014; Hill et al., 2023). As such derived from

Garrett (1992) and Moravcsik (1993), IR scholars of intergovernmentalism generally understood European integration as “the practice of ordinary diplomacy under conditions creating unusual opportunities providing collective goods through highly institutionalised exchange” (Pierson, 1996, p. 124). Synthesising intergovernmentalism with historical institutionalism, Pierson (1996) acknowledged that “member states are the central institutions building the [European Community]” as they serve their own purposes (p. 157), however, also highlighted the complexities around tracing the motivations of politicians as political actors in distinguishing the “intended from the unintended” in this regard (p. 158). Moreover, drawn on both schools of thought of historical institutionalism and rational choice, Mark Pollack (2009) described European integration as the acceptance of “the common norms and common standards of legitimacy” involving “European values such as democracy and free markets” (p. 13-14).

In the meanwhile, the oil crisis of 1973 provided a momentum for “changes in global trade patterns and rising unemployment and inflation, market liberalisation, and monetarist economics, while green movements also squeezed support” (Benedetto et al., 2020, p. 931). With these global developments and inspired by Churchill (1943) promoting the welfare state but more by Hayek (1944) opposing collectivism, Margaret Thatcher introduced neoliberalism for the first time as a political programme in the UK named Thatcherism (Fanning, 2021), and won the UK elections of 1979 by a landslide from the Labour Party. As a political economic philosophy, neoliberalism advocates for individual welfare which can be best achieved by liberating entrepreneurial freedoms and skills through enforced rights for private property, free markets, and free trade (Harvey, 2007).

Rising in the 1980s, neoliberalism became a dominant political force among member states enhancing a “larger role to the market and a smaller role to the state,” while the latter became more a regulator than a stakeholder/investor during this decade (Verdun et al., 2023, p. 188). Around the same time starting in 1988, the communist bloc formally ceased to exist with the Belovezha Accords in 1991. While equating “the end of history with the death of utopianism,” IR scholar Francis Fukuyama (1989) famously proclaimed “the triumph of liberal democracy in the absence of viable systematic alternatives,” which for him meant “the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government,” and as such that “in the West the ideals of political liberalism had vanquished Christian theocracy as well as communism and in the wider world only Islam proposed a political alternative to both liberalism and communism” (Fanning, 2021, p. 204). Considerably from an IR perspective, it seems then not surprising that the EEC transformed into the European Union with the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, right after the fall of the communist bloc. Nonetheless, the Treaty of Maastricht is considered a huge turning point regarding European integration among scholars (Baun, 1995; Lubbers & Jaspers, 2011; Usherwood & Startin, 2013; Barth & Bijsmans, 2018).

During the 1990s, from an IR perspective the “new world order” was established and further shaped under the hegemony of the United States (Bush, 1990, p. 2; Carpenter, 1991). In global economic terms, this development meant the end of the Bretton Woods international economic system resulting in the liberalisation of international financial flows accompanied with the further liberalisation of (international) markets and increasing international trade (Eatwell, 1997). These developments are referred to as globalisation, inspired by Thatcher’s neoliberalism (Bush, 1990), and rapidly spreading to emerging economies (Eatwell, 1997). As wealth increasingly concentrated in rich countries, it provided lots of benefits to many and an abundance of prosperity to few (Eatwell, 1997). However, it also resulted in many systemic risks which have led to lower growth rates of the global economy (Eatwell, 1997). This has contributed directly and indirectly to international migration flows, as Marx and Engels predicted almost two centuries ago (1848). While migration is a phenomenon older than humanity, neoliberalism viewed migration merely as a benefit of and to market-driven forces as it provides cheaper labour by reducing state intervention to enable flows of internal and external migration (Favell, 2014). In that regard, EU’s freedom of movement of persons has moreover benefitted migrants while adhering also to other neoliberal principles of “mobile, open, and non-discriminatory labour markets” (Favell, 2014, p. 275). In this regard, some social democratic parties adjusted their political agenda “in a proposal of greater openness toward immigrants” (Indelicato et al., 2023, p. 2). However in the long run, immigration, national identity, and sovereignty became more salient in political arenas by the increasing contestation of different types of internationalisation (Hooghe & Marks, 2009; Indelicato et al., 2023).

2.4 Euroskepticism

The trends of European integration, the collapse of communism in 1991, and globalisation, facilitated the third wave of social democracy (Boix, 1998; Garrett, 1998; Benedetto et al., 2020). This third wave of social democracy emerged around the idea of centre politics which is referred to as the *third way*, *neue mitte*, or *new middle*, demonstrating its adaptation to the new global economic system by emphasising the regulation of markets, supply-side economic management, balancing budgets, and social liberalism and environmentalism (Giddens, 2013). Simultaneously, while neoliberalism originated in the UK in the 1980s, the phenomenon of Euroskepticism also originated in the UK during the same time (George, 2000). As mentioned in the introduction, Euroskepticism was initially conceptualised as an “encompassing term” both academically and politically as the idea that “expresses contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration” (Taggart, 1998, p. 366). Later, alternative frameworks of Euroskepticism were provided by Taggart & Szczerbiak (2002) distinguishing between ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ Euroskepticism.

Over time, Euroskepticism enjoyed greater attention and not exclusively in the UK. Various spill-over theories suggest that developments in some EU member states can contribute to increasing

Eurosceptic sentiments in other countries (Ioannou et al., 2015; Ares et al., 2017). Meanwhile according to the salience theory, Hooghe and Marks (2009) argued that “domestic and European politics have become more tightly coupled as governments have become responsive to public pressures on European integration” (p. 2). Drawing on this line, Baute et al. (2018) empirically demonstrate that Europeans are increasingly concerned about the loss of social security provoked by European integration and accompanied with utilitarian and ideological factors that became increasingly impactful. More than initially believed, voters gain an increasingly detailed understanding of the integration process as a consequence of spill-over effects (Baute et al., 2018). Complementary to the latter and from an institutionalist rational choice perspective, Euroscepticism is then simply a set of preferences of voters and political actors regarding the structure of European institutions, and subsequently, if the prescribed policies by political actors are closer to their ideal preferences, voters are likely to be pro-EU as many centrists are (Hix, 2007). On the other side, much like other extremists, voters are likely to be Eurosceptic if they believe that policies will stray further from their ideal viewpoints (Hix, 2007). Therefore, as mainstream catch-all political parties have been putting forward European integration from around the political centre (Hooghe & Marks, 2009), these parties in most EU member states have been able to keep out Euroscepticism within their ranks as well as Eurosceptic parties within governing coalitions for a long time (Mair, 2000; Van Der Eijk & Franklin, 2004). However, ideological and strategic choices taken by political actors in order to distinguish themselves for electoral gains in accordance with the spatial theory, suggest limited options for pro-integration parties in fear of being qualified as anti-European (Neumayer, 2008), and in its turn, increasing European integration has also led to limited policy space for political actors to distinguish themselves from each other (Meyerrose, 2021), with all its consequences.

2.5 Decline of Social Democracy

According to a strand of salience theory focusing on political parties, the EU is indeed becoming more salient in the domestic political arena (Spoon, 2012), and parties choose to politicise European concerns more as they provide their voters with information to stand out over other parties during elections by pointing out their policy preferences in manifestos (Spoon, 2012). At the same time, voters are increasingly likely to consider the EU when casting their votes (Hix & Marsh, 2007; Hobolt et al., 2009). Previously compliant voters then started to express their concerns regarding increasing European integration, whereas mainstream parties commonly maintained their pro-integration preferences creating unintentionally opportunities for challenger parties (Buhr, 2012).

Since 2000, social democracy has been in decline. Once enjoying over 40% of the voter shares, social democratic parties have fallen to below 20% or less of the voter shares across Europe (Benedetto et al., 2020). Although social democracy had managed to adapt multiple times throughout its history, it seemed to struggle in the new political reality. At the same time, in response to increasing Euroscepticism, mainstream centre-right parties seemingly shifted gradually towards a more

Eurosceptic position. Empirical evidence from a study comparing centre-right to extreme-right Euroscepticism confirms this trend, but concludes that centre-right Euroscepticism significantly differs from that of extreme-right (Treib, 2020). Rather than shifting towards an extreme Eurosceptic narrative, centre-right Euroscepticism manages to frame their criticism “in a way that allows for alignment with their traditional programmatic narratives” (Treib, 2020, p. 6), in line with the spatial theory. Meanwhile, Eurosceptic attitudes had gradually shifted from the political margins to the mainstream in recent decades (Brack & Startin, 2015).

Opposing the spatial theory, the issue evolution theory which stems from the salience theory, argues that parties compete with each other based on issue ownership (Meijers, 2017). In extent, Petrocik (1996) argued that “parties mobilise or ‘own’ different issues and try to gain comparative advantage by emphasising those issues” (Meijers, 2017, p. 414). Meijers (2017) then argued that these theories are not opposing but rather complementary, referring to Abou-Chadi (2016) and Meyer & Wagner (2014). As such, Meijers (2017) demonstrated that centre-left parties are more susceptible to economic and cultural Eurosceptic arguments from both extreme-left and extreme-right parties, while centre-right parties are only susceptible to cultural Eurosceptic arguments from extreme-right parties as causal mechanism of contagious Euroscepticism, combining both spatial and issue evolution theories of rationality. In the next chapter, this theory serves as the starting point of the premise of the theoretical framework.

3. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I initially define the concepts of Euroscepticism as the independent variable and social democracy in the EU as the dependent variable, followed by the demarcation of my premise based on the previously discussed theories and present my arguments in order to subsequently draw the clear and substantiated expectations of this study in the form of hypothesis.

3.1 Definitions

Starting with the independent variable, I define Euroscepticism based on Taggart (1998) as the expression of “contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration” (p. 366). Additionally, I follow Meijers (2017) by utilising the distinction between ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ Euroscepticism, whereas soft Euroscepticism implies a reformist approach and hard Euroscepticism implies a revolutionary approach as it entirely rejects the EU (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002). In specific, soft Euroscepticism is “where there is NOT a principled objection to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of policy areas leads to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU, or where there is a sense that ‘national interest’ is currently at odds with the EU trajectory,” and hard Euroscepticism is “where there is a principled opposition to the EU and European integration and therefore can be seen in parties who think that their countries should withdraw from membership, or whose policies towards

the EU are tantamount to bring opposed to the while project of European integration” (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002, p. 4). This framework is displayed in table 1 attached to the appendix. For the dependent variable, I consider Benedetto et al.’s (2020) and Fanning’s (2021) descriptions of (the waves of) social democracy, and Hooghe & Marks’ (2009) conclusion that “European integration has been put forward by parties from the ideological centre and by moderate parties from the centre-left and centre-right (Debus, 2022, p. 2). In that case, what has always been persistent since the first wave of social democracy is the objective to collectively cooperate in order to overcome emerging societal challenges characterised by the ideal of the welfare state as well as the economic spearhead of distributing welfare among citizens, varying intellectually between conservative in terms of the welfare state and progressive in terms of inclusivity, individual rights, and environmentalism, and are historically reformatory regarding EU integration, through the liberal democratic system (Benedetto et al., 2020; Fanning, 2021). Besides, drawing further on historical institutionalism, if member states are the central institutions building the European Union but assessing politicians as political actors remains challenging (Pierson, 1996), then political parties with their party manifesto’s expressing their set of preferences are the political actors, as Hix (2007) suggested, representing the compromise between various politicians. On a higher level, this mechanism would imply that a coalition or governance agreement serves as a compromise between multiple political parties then expressing the set of preferences of member states which are, in their turn, the central institutions building the European Union as Pierson (1996) suggested. According to the previous and in relation to Euroscepticism, I define social democracy in West European member states as inherently reformists represented by social democratic parties as political actors aiming to cooperate within the political system in order to reach their objectives through state intervention.

3.2 Premise

As mentioned in the previous chapter, I assume the increasing presence of Euroscepticism according to Usherwood and Startin (2013) who argue that Euroscepticism is an “increasingly embedded and persistent phenomenon within the integration process” (p. 14). Meanwhile, empirical evidence demonstrates that social democratic parties are in a decline since the year 2000 (Benedetto et al., 2020). In that context and as social democracy is traditionally considered as centre-left on the left-right political spectrum, I draw on Meijers’ (2017) contagious Euroscepticism combining the spatial and issue evolution theory. Additional empirical evidence confirms this trend from a centre-right party orientation, but demonstrates that these parties rather than reaching an extreme Eurosceptic narrative, centre-right Euroscepticism significantly differs from that of extreme-right as centre-right parties manage to frame their criticism “in a way that allows for alignment with their traditional programmatic narratives” (Treib, 2020, p. 6). In the same theoretical sphere of rationality and from a more historical institutionalist perspective, if political parties increasingly choose to politicise European concerns as they provide voters with information in an attempt to stand out over other

parties during elections by pointing out their preferences in manifestos and as such mainstream parties commonly maintained their pro-integration preferences (Spoon, 2012; Buhr, 2012), then Euroscepticism as an ideology is simply a set of choices by political actors as suggested by Hix (2007). Since mainstream political parties including social democracy have historically contributed to further European integration (Hooghe & Marks, 2009), these parties have long managed to keep Euroscepticism out of their ranks as well as Eurosceptic parties out of governing coalitions as well (Mair, 2000; Van Der Eijk, 2004). In addition, these parties have taken ideological and strategic choices in order to avoid being qualified as anti-European (Neumayer, 2008), but then suffered from limited policy space to distinguish themselves from one another (Meyerrose, 2021).

3.3 Predictions

Following the above presented theoretical premise and despite economic and cultural Eurosceptic arguments from both extreme-left and extreme-right political parties, I argue that increasing and embedded Euroscepticism has not led to a fourth wave of social democracy in the EU. And as such, I argue that the economic and cultural preferences of social democratic parties in the EU remained according to their reformist ideology in support of European integration meaning that Euroscepticism is absent or softly present, while simultaneously an electoral decline has been observed in the last decade. I distinguish between both economic and cultural preferences as well as reformist or revolutionary Eurosceptic approaches supporting or opposing European integration, which allows me to hypothesise the following predictions as depicted below:

H₀: In the increasing presence of Euroscepticism, social democracy in West European member states has not reached revolutionary Euroscepticism through cultural and economic preferences and maintained its reformist approach in support of European integration in the last decade.

H₁: In the increasing presence of Euroscepticism, social democracy in West European member states has reached revolutionary Euroscepticism through cultural but not economic preferences, moving away from its reformist approach in the last decade.

H₂: In the increasing presence of Euroscepticism, social democracy in West European member states has reached revolutionary Euroscepticism through economic but not cultural preferences, moving away from its reformist approach in the last decade.

H₃: In the increasing presence of Euroscepticism, social democracy in West European member states has reached revolutionary Euroscepticism through both cultural and economic preferences, moving away from its reformist approach in the last decade.

4. Research Design

In this chapter, I stipulate the methodology to increase the transparency and replicability of this study build upon the theoretical framework. In addition, I present the operationalisation including indicators to ensure the reliability and validity of this study. Accordingly, I select a case to test this approach and present the systematically collected data in the next chapter.

4.1 Methodology

Based on the theoretical framework, I attempt to deductively provide an in-depth analysis based on Meijers' (2017) empirical study uncovering the causal relationship between Euroscepticism and centre-left parties, additional to Benedetto et al.'s (2020) empirical demonstration of the electoral decline of social democratic parties in the EU, and in combination with Usherwood and Startin's (2013) claim and Taggart & Szcerbiak's (2002) framework of Euroscepticism. In order to formulate an answer to the research question, I utilise a mixed approach of the qualitative methods by combining process tracing and content analysis. As a fundamental tool of qualitative analysis, process tracing aims for the systematic examination of evidence selected and analysed in regards to the research question and posed hypotheses in order to contribute to descriptions of political and social phenomena and assessing causal claims (Collier, 2011). On the other side, content analysis is a method that allows to systematically analyse the content of various data as it enables the reduction of phenomena or events into defined categories to provide a suitable analysis and interpretation (Harwood & Garry, 2003). For political texts, it requires validation of the measures to correspond with the claimed concepts (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013). Whereas empirical evidence demonstrates the impact of Euroscepticism on social democratic parties electorally (Meijers, 2017; Benedetto et al., 2020), the research question of this study attempts to further explore this impact of Euroscepticism on social democracy represented by social democratic parties as political actors in West European member states. In that regard, the combination of process tracing and content analysis is best suited for assessing social democracy in the EU over time.

Further, since Usherwood & Startin (2013) argued that Euroscepticism is an "increasingly embedded and persistent phenomenon within the integration process" (p. 14), then the 2016 Brexit referendum can be regarded as peak Euroscepticism as no other country has ever voted to leave the European Union, and therefore, serves as the critical juncture for the process tracing approach, considering several spillover theories (Ioannou et al., 2015; Ares et al., 2017). Other studies have indeed confirmed disintegration encouraging spillover effects in the short run, while in the long run spillover effects resulted in the deterrence of disintegration due to the complexities of the Brexit (Malet et al., 2021; Walter, 2021). Further, Meijers (2017) addresses various Eurosceptic critiques to centre-left parties derived from relevant academic literature. For Eurosceptic arguments from extreme-left parties, Meijers (2017) highlights neoliberal and wealth distribution critiques (Statham & Trezz, 2012; Hooghe et al., 2002; Kriesi et al., 2008). For cultural Eurosceptic arguments from extreme-right

parties, Meijers (2017) highlights immigration and national identity and sovereignty critiques (Bale et al., 2010; van Spanje, 2010; Hooghe & Marks, 2009). Further, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the unit of analysis will be the party manifestations since social democracy is represented by social democratic political parties as political actors with their set of preferences stated in party manifestations according to Hix (2007). The research design is depicted in the table below and attached to the appendix.

Research Design	
Research question	
What is the impact of Euroscepticism on social democracy in Western European member states?	
Independent variable	Dependent variable
Euroscepticism	Social democracy in Western European member states
<i>Process tracing</i>	
Before	After
Critical juncture	
2016 Brexit referendum	
<i>Content analysis</i>	
Unit of analysis	Unit of analysis
Social democratic party manifestations	Social democratic party manifestations
Aspects (Meijers, 2017)	Aspects (Meijers, 2017)
Susceptibility to economic Eurosceptic arguments	Susceptibility to economic Eurosceptic arguments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neoliberalism critique - Welfare distribution critique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neoliberalism critique - Wealth distribution critique
Susceptibility to cultural Eurosceptic arguments	Susceptibility to cultural Eurosceptic arguments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immigration critique - National identity and sovereignty critique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immigration critique - National identity and sovereignty critique
Approach (Taggart & Szczepiński, 2002)	Approach (Taggart & Szczepiński, 2002)
Reformist: absence or presence of soft Euroscepticism	Reformist: absence or presence of soft Euroscepticism
Revolutionary: presence of hard Euroscepticism	Revolutionary: presence of hard Euroscepticism

4.3 Case selection

Due to the scope of this study, only a limited number of social democratic parties are suitable for the case selection. First, the country of interest need to be a EU member state located in West Europe and secondly, the political party of interest needs to traditionally represent social democracy in accordance with Benedetto et al.'s (2020) list of social democratic parties. In addition, the electoral systems need to mostly similar to ensure the external validity of this study. As a result, the following parties are suited for this study: PvdA (NL), SP (BE), PS (LUX), PS (FR), SPD (GER), and SPÖ (AUS). For the sake of accessibility in terms of language, I select the PvdA in The Netherlands as suitable case. Empirical evidence demonstrates that social democracy in The Netherlands has not been an exception to the three waves of social democracy and the accompanied patterns of success and decline (Benedetto et al., 2020). Achieving its highest electoral outcome with 53 seats in 1977 under

the leadership of Dutch social democratic pioneer Joop den Uyl, it suffered its greatest electoral loss not only in its own history but also in the Dutch parliamentary history 40 years later in 2017, dropping from 38 to 9 seats (NOS, 2017). This electoral loss has moved the PvdA from coalition to opposition. Besides, the PvdA is member of the PES, the European social democratic party family, which also includes the other possible cases. These parties through international forums are cooperating continuously to coordinate their efforts. Additionally, what makes The Netherlands an interesting case in particular, is that the back-then Eurosceptic and opposition leader Geert Wilders called for a *Nexit* in wake of the Brexit referendum. Wilders pointed out to a poll that suggests a majority support for an exit-referendum (NL Times, 2016; Nieuwsuur, 2016; Holligan, 2016), which implies the disintegration encouraging spillover effects in the short run (Malet et al., 2021; Walter, 2021). Subsequently, the PvdA manifestations *Nederland Sterker & Socialer* (2012) outlining the set of preferences before Brexit as opposition party, *Een verbonden samenleving* (2017) outlining the set of preferences after Brexit as coalition party, and *Ons plan voor een eerlijker en fatsoenlijker Nederland* (2021) outlining the set of preferences after Brexit as opposition party, are serving as the data sources for this study.

4.2 Operationalisation

In order to systematically analyse the content of the party manifestations for changes in Euroscepticism of social democracy in West European member states, I develop a coding frame accounting for the susceptibility of economic and cultural Eurosceptic arguments encompassing neoliberal, wealth distribution, immigration, and national identity and sovereignty critiques as argued by Meijers (2017), accompanied with preference indicators and the absence or presence of soft/hard Euroscepticism according to Taggart & Szczerbiak's (2002) framework. The coding frame is displayed on the next page and attached to the appendix in table 2. As such, only preferences clearly mentioning or indicating Euroscepticism are collected by scanning the data sources with a list of relevant keywords, for instance, *Europa*, *EU*, and *richtlijn*. The full list of keywords is attached to the appendix in table 3. For assessing Euroscepticism in the preferences, I apply the definitions of soft and hard Euroscepticism as defined in the theoretical framework and look for verbs indicating the normative direction, such as *stands for*, *should*, *wants to*, *stop*, and *leave*. Preferences that do not meet these conditions remain irrelevant for the scope of this study and are not collected. With this approach, I primarily collect preferences susceptible to economic and cultural Eurosceptic arguments, and filter out other preferences. Then, I cross-check the collected data with the different data sources and omit data that is unique to a single data source. While on one side, social democracy has proven its resilience against societal challenges, on the other, assessing Euroscepticism on continuous topics allows me to robustly track for any changes over time. For instance, preferences regarding the Corona pandemic are omitted, while preferences regarding the pharmaceutical industry are collected. The collected data is coded based on the following order: the preference is set in the given aspect,

susceptible to the given critique, encompassing at least one of the given indicators, and indicates the absence or presence of soft/hard Euroscepticism.

With this operation, I identify, collect, and code preferences susceptible to Euroscepticism and subsequently analyse the data for (patterns of) any changes in Euroscepticism before and after Brexit. As such, while conducting a deductive study, I adhere to the falsification criterion of empirical science (Popper, 2014). In addition, the distinction between the absence or presence of soft Euroscepticism (reformist) and hard Euroscepticism (revolutionary) allows me to provide a more detailed analysis of the impact of Euroscepticism. In the next chapter I present the data analysis and assess the hypotheses.

Coding frame			
Aspect	Critique	Preference indicators	Euroscepticism
1. Economic (Meijers, 2017)	1.1. Neoliberal (Statham & Trenz, 2013)	Less state intervention through enforcing rights for private property and capital, liberating markets, encouraging free trade, cuts in state expenditure (smaller state), and balancing budgets. (Eatwell, 1997; Harvey, 2007; Giddens; Verdun et al., 2023)	111 Absent 112 Soft 113 Hard (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002)
	1.2. Welfare distribution in terms of wealth and wellbeing (Hooghe et al., 2002; Kriesi et al., 2008; Fanning, 2021)	More state intervention (social liberalism) with regulated/social markets, supply-side economic management, individual welfare, and environmentalism, by efforts such as liberating entrepreneurial freedoms and skills, gender equality, and compliance with other individual rights. (Harvey, 2007; Giddens, 2013)	121 Absent 122 Soft 123 Hard (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002)
2. Cultural (Meijers, 2017)	2.1 Immigration (Bale et al., 2010; Van Spanje, 2010)	Openness towards migration by (reducing) state intervention on different flows of internal and external migration, including mobile and open non-discriminatory labour markets, integration and participation efforts, at least compliant with the single market principles of the EU. (Favell, 2014; Indelicato et al., 2023)	211 Absent 212 Soft 213 Hard (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002)
	2.2 National identity and sovereignty (Hooghe & Marks, 2009)	Efforts to maintain or increase internationalisation, including globalisation and Europeanisation, for instance, through bilateral/multilateral agreements, and compliance with international as well as European regulations, judiciary overruling, and enforcing the European and international legal order. (Meyerrose, 2021).	221 Absent 222 Soft 223 Hard (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002)

5. Empirical Chapter

In this chapter, I present the analysis accompanied with empirical evidence. Due to the limitations of this thesis, the complete evidence is demonstrated in table 6 in conjunction with table 5 attached to the appendix and therefore, I only present several instances track paths per Eurosceptic critique after a the general analysis of the impact of Euroscepticism on social democracy in West European member states.

5.1 Analysis

The table below depicts the data units categorised on continuous topics and marked whether Euroscepticism is absent or present in either soft or hard form. Since almost all data units contain multiple ideological and/or policy preferences, the absolute numbers do not indicate any robust implications.

PvdA preferences	Euroscepticism			
	Reformist: Absent / soft Euroscepticism Revolutionary: hard Euroscepticism			
	Year			
Topic	2012 data units	Brexit	2017 data units	2021 data units
Labour market and discrimination in the labour market (migrant workers), position of workers, social markets, (housing, healthcare, pharmaceutical industry)	6: 8: 15: 16: 45: 46: 47: 48: 49		91: 104: 123: 125: 126: 129: 130: 131	149: 150: 151: 152: 153: 159: 160: 161: 162: 196: 209: 216: 218: 219: 220: 221: 223
Asylum, (im)migration, integration, and (non)discrimination, language inclusion, children's rights	11: 13: 14: 17: 19: 23: 70: 75: 80		85: 86: 87: 88: 89: 90: 92: 93: 96: 97: 98: 99: 100: 101: 103: 105	184: 185: 186: 187: 188: 191: 192: 194: 195: 197: 198: 199: 200: 207: 215: 217: 223: 224: 225: 226: 227: 228: 229: 230
Financial markets and the banking sector (Banking Union)	5: 7: 51: 52: 53: 54: 55: 56: 83		111: 112: 113	157
Economy, agriculture, climate, nature, and animal welfare	4: 24: 25: 26: 27: 31: 32: 33: 34: 76: 78		110: 116: 117: 118: 119: 120: 121: 122: 128: 135: 136: 137	163: 164: 165: 166: 167: 169: 170: 171: 175: 176
Sexual violence, gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights	9: 10: 66: 67: 69		94: 95: 102: 148	182: 183: 190: 193
EU, Rule of Law, public finances (taxation), international cooperation, military operations and fight against terrorism	18: 35: 36: 37: 38: 39: 40: 41: 42: 43: 44: 57: 58: 59: 60: 61: 62: 63: 64: 65: 68: 71: 72: 73: 74: 77: 79		84: 106: 107: 108: 109: 114: 115: 127: 138: 139: 140: 141: 142: 143: 144: 145: 146: 147	154: 155: 156: 178: 179: 180: 181: 189: 201: 202: 204: 208: 210: 211: 212: 213: 214: 231: 232: 233: 234: 235: 236: 237: 238: 239: 240: 242: 243: 244: 245: 246: 247: 248
Cooperation in the Kingdom of The Netherlands	81			203
Single-market principles, transportation, and railways and aviation	20: 28: 29: 30		124: 132: 133: 134	172: 173: 174
Privacy	21			206
Total data units	76		65	99
Omitted data units	1: 2: 3: 12: 22: 50: 82			158: 168: 205: 241

Overall, the analysis overview demonstrates that all preferences are reformist with a single exception in 2012. Ironically, this revolutionary hard Euroscepticism preference is present before Brexit. This exception is regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for which the PvdA preferred to “stop unilateral support for Israel” and prefers to “get back in line with Europe” to support the peace process by using their good ties with both sides of the conflict in 2012 (PvdA, 2012, p. 64). In extent, the PvdA preferred an “active and political role for the European Union” by “reconsidering Israel’s Association Agreement with the EU” in 2017 (PvdA, 2021, p. 61), and preferred a “two-state solution between Israel and Palestine” with the EU using “all possible means to revive the peace process” in 2021 (PvdA, 2021, p. 96). As only one of the 76 data sources before Brexit is revolutionary, it can be regarded as an outlier. Therefore, the preferences susceptible for economic and cultural Eurosceptic arguments from both extreme-left and extreme-right political parties before Brexit in 2012 are considered reformist of origin as argued in the theoretical framework. Subsequently, I demonstrate per critique in each aspect how Euroscepticism within social democracy developed with some instances due to the limitations of this thesis.

For the neoliberal critique in the economic aspect, the PvdA while being part of the opposition in 2012, for instance, preferred to adhere to the Stability and Growth Pact and focused on “a fiscal policy that offers the prospect of a structurally balanced budget in 2017” but opted for room in the Pact accounting for countries’ “exceptional economic circumstances” (PvdA, 2012, p. 57), compliant with the neoliberal indicator of balancing budgets (Giddens, 2013), and indicating the presence of soft Euroscepticism (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002). After Brexit in 2017 being part of the coalition, the PvdA did not adjust their preferences as it opted for “responsible fiscal policy to include the interests of low unemployment” emphasising the importance of balancing public finances (PvdA, 2017, p. 24). However, it even opted for stricter regulation focusing on the “interests of low unemployment” in European context (PvdA, 2017, p. 24), again indicating soft Euroscepticism as the EU was accordingly not doing enough. In 2021 as part of the opposition, the PvdA adjusted their preference radically as it opted for the priority of “comprehensive welfare” in national budgets, arguing that the EU “budgetary rules have become increasingly complicated in recent years and did not allow the government to play an important role in a crisis” (PvdA, 2021, p. 15). However, it opted for new agreements on the European level for “responsible public finances” (PvdA, 2021, p. 15), and thus still indicating soft Euroscepticism. This track path clearly indicates the continuous reformist approach of the PvdA regarding the neoliberal critique in the economic aspect.

For the wealth distribution critique in the economic aspect, the PvdA in 2012 as opposition party, for instance, preferred strengthening the “position of employees” by given them the right to be internationally represented through strengthening the “position of European Works Councils” opting for them to acquire the “right of consent in merges and acquisitions” (PvdA, 2012, p. 28). In addition, it preferred to make The Netherlands “a leader in animal welfare and animal protection in a European

and international context,” and aimed to reduce “European agricultural subsidies” (PvdA, 2012, p. 54-55). Both preferences encompass the wealth distribution indicators of social markets and environmentalism (Giddens, 2013), indicating the presence of soft Euroscepticism (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002). In 2017 as part of the coalition, the PvdA maintained its preferences for employees by opting for the “firm enforcement against labour market discrimination” (PvdA, 2017, p. 13), as well as improvement for “animal welfare” by amending the regulations (PvdA, 2017, p. 30). As such both preferences encompass the wealth distribution indicators and continue to indicate the presence of soft Euroscepticism. Subsequently in 2021 as opposition party, the PvdA did not change their preferences on both instances as it opted to increase “the chance of catching evasion of social legislation by freeing up sufficient resources for the European labour inspectorate” by forcing member states to cooperate, “otherwise sanctions will follow” (PvdA, 2021, p. 89), and better enforce “the law for painless slaughter” regarding animal welfare (PvdA, 2021, p. 59). This track path clearly indicates the continuation of PvdA’s reformist approach regarding the wealth distribution critique in the economic aspect as well. Therefore, hypothesis 2 and hypothesis 3, indicating the shift to revolutionary Euroscepticism in the economic aspect, are rejected.

For the immigration critique in the cultural aspect, the PvdA in 2012 as opposition party preferred, for instance, to favour “selective admission of labour migrants” as opening the labour market to “workers from new EU member states should not have a disruptive effect on Dutch society” while complying with “the rules” (PvdA, 2012, p. 33), encompassing openness towards different flows of migration and at least compliant with the single market principle of the EU (Favell, 2014), and indicating soft Euroscepticism (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002). In addition, the PvdA preferred a “strict but fair admission policy for asylum seekers” while standing “firmly behind the Refugee Convention, human rights treaties and EU asylum directives” (PvdA, 2012, p. 34), and emphasises “cooperation in Europe” as it prefers “equal European admission rules, jointly guarded external borders and humane reception in all EU member states” (PvdA, 2012, p. 34), also encompassing openness towards different flows of migration and indicates the absence of Euroscepticism for the first and the presence of soft Euroscepticism for the latter. In 2017 as a coalition party, the PvdA preferred, for instance, to tighten the “Posting of Workers Directive” to “end labour migration as a business model based on cost differences between foreign workers and Dutch colleagues (PvdA, 2017, p. 32), as well as to adopt “the same asylum policy” for all European countries and a fair distribution “among EU countries” (PvdA, 2017, p. 17). Both encompassing the immigration critique preference indicators as well as soft Euroscepticism. Subsequently in 2021 as opposition party, the PvdA adjusted its position on first topic as they preferred to opt for defending the “European values of freedom and equality” and cherish “the freedom to work where you want within the EU” by properly and decently regulating this (PvdA, 2021, p. 89), shifting from the presence of soft-Euroscepticism to the absence of Euroscepticism. For the other, the PvdA maintained its preference for a “European asylum system

based on solidarity and protection” in a new “European migration pact” (PvdA, 2021, p. 89). As such, this track path clearly indicates the continuation of PvdA’s reformist approach in which sometimes even a shift from the presence of soft-Euroscepticism to the absence of Euroscepticism is visible.

For the national identity and sovereignty critique in the cultural aspect, the PvdA in 2012 as opposition party preferred, for instance, to change the EU as it is “too distanced” from its citizens with “little influence from national parliaments and the European Parliament” but also “strongly supports European cooperation” (PvdA, 2012, p. 56), while standing “firmly for human rights, the rule of law and democracy” (PvdA, 2012, p. 63). These preferences are compliant with the European and international legal order indicators (Meyerrose, 2021), and indicate the presence of soft-Euroscepticism (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002). After having entered the coalition, the PvdA in 2017 preferred to opt for the EU to become an ally of the people again “focusing on really important issues, such as promoting security through good work and managing the flow of refugees” while “protecting the rule of law and human rights in the EU” (PvdA, 2017, p. 60), indicating the continuation of soft Euroscepticism. Whereas for the Brexit negotiations, the PvdA opted for The Netherlands to “demand new fair rules of the game for workers in Europe” (PvdA, 2017, p. 61), indicating the absence of Euroscepticism as it utilised the EU as a trading bloc versus the UK. Further in 2021 as part of the opposition, the PvdA preferred to opt for more “autonomy” of the EU as a Union against global superpowers as the US (relations have “cooled considerably” since “Trump took office”), Russia, and China in a new versatile global geopolitical situation (PvdA, 2021, p. 97-98). At the same time, it presented more international preferences in which the PvdA each time opted for greater European cooperation, in fields such as military, climate, and economy (PvdA, 2021, pp. 96-99) with specific emphasis on the “rule of law and human rights” as the EU is “seriously failing” (PvdA, 2021, p. 93), therefore sometimes indicating the absence of Euroscepticism and other times indicating the presence of soft Euroscepticism but never rejected European integration (PvdA, 2021). This track path also clearly indicates the continuation of PvdA’s reformist approach in which shifts between the absence of Euroscepticism and the presence of soft-Euroscepticism is visible as well. Therefore, hypothesis 1, indicating the shift towards revolutionary Euroscepticism in the cultural aspect, is rejected in addition to hypothesis 2 and 3. As a result, hypothesis 0 which indicates that no change has taken place, cannot be rejected.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Since the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, it is sound to conclude that in the increasing presence of Euroscepticism, social democracy in West European member states has not reached revolutionary Euroscepticism through cultural and economic preferences and maintained its reformist approach in support of European integration in the last decade. Over time, different levels of reformist approaches have been empirically visible in the data shifting between the absence and presence of soft

Euroscepticism. This conclusion is not only compatible with Benedetto et al.'s (2020) study, but also confirms Meijer's (2017) study of contagious Euroscepticism as the PvdA dropped from 38 seats in 2012, to 9 seats in 2017, and maintained its 9 seats in 2021. At the same time, the particular impact of Brexit on social democracy in this study remains unclear as other factors such as the Eurozone crisis, its aftermath, and the Russian aggression in Ukraine (since 2014) could have possibly influenced the proposed relationship. However, since in my premise I assumed the increasingly embedded and persistent presence of Euroscepticism and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, I conclude that the impact of Euroscepticism on social democracy in West European member states has not been negative at the least. This answer to the research question would then be *partially* compatible with the studies demonstrating that Eurosceptic spillover effects in the long run result in the deterrence of disintegration due to the complexities of Brexit (Malet et al., 2021; Walter, 2021). However, I stress the word partially, because in this study the assessment of the impact of Brexit remains insufficient.

Further, it provides opportunities for future studies. For example, a more specific study drawn on Malet et al. (2021) and Walter (2021) could provide more insight. Another suggestion for more insight is to apply the developed coding frame in this study, in a future study that assesses the party manifestations of both PvdA and VVD (liberals) compared to the coalition agreement between PvdA and VVD in 2012 for analysing Euroscepticism on a member state level, as member states remain the central institutions building the European Union (Pierson, 1996). Such an approach could then be utilised for studying other member states in relation to Euroscepticism.

As for policy recommendations, I could only confirm social democratic preferences to increase taxes for the 'super' rich and big transnational companies as social democracy accepted and adapted to the neoliberal global economic reality. If social democratic parties seek to maintain social securities and uphold the welfare state, then states must increase their revenue in order to afford these social provisions.

As a final remark, the reformists did not revolt.

Appendix

Table 1) Euroscepticism Framework

Euroscepticism framework	
Definition	“The idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration” (Taggart, 1998, p. 366).
Revolutionary	“ Hard Euroscepticism is where there is a principled opposition to the EU and European integration and therefore can be seen in parties who think that their countries should withdraw from membership, or whose policies towards the EU are tantamount to bring opposed to the while project of European integration” (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002, p. 4).
Reformist	“ Soft Euroscepticism is where there is NOT a principles objection to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of policy areas leads to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU, or where there is a sense that ‘national interest’ is currently at odds with the EU trajectory” (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002, p. 4).

Table 2) Research Design

Research Design	
Research question	
What is the impact of Euroscepticism on social democracy in West European member states?	
Independent variable Euroscepticism	Dependent variable Social democracy in West European member states
<i>Process tracing</i>	
Before	After
Critical juncture 2016 Brexit referendum	
<i>Content analysis</i>	
Unit of analysis Social democratic party manifestations Aspects (Meijers, 2017) Susceptibility to economic Eurosceptic arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neoliberalism critique - Welfare distribution critique Susceptibility to cultural Eurosceptic arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immigration critique - National identity and sovereignty critique Approach (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002) Reformist: absence or presence of soft Euroscepticism Revolutionary: presence of hard Euroscepticism	Unit of analysis Social democratic party manifestations Aspects (Meijers, 2017) Susceptibility to economic Eurosceptic arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neoliberalism critique - Wealth distribution critique Susceptibility to cultural Eurosceptic arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immigration critique - National identity and sovereignty critique Approach (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002) Reformist: absence or presence of soft Euroscepticism Revolutionary: presence of hard Euroscepticism

Table 3) List of relevant keywords

Keywords
<i>EU;</i>
<i>Europa;</i>
<i>Europees;</i>
<i>Europese;</i>
<i>Richtlijn;</i>
<i>Regelgeving;</i>
<i>Regel;</i>
<i>Wet;</i>
<i>Beleid;</i>
<i>Brussel;</i>
<i>Pact;</i>
<i>Directive;</i>
<i>System;</i>
<i>Systeem;</i>
<i>Buurlanden;</i>
<i>Continent;</i>
<i>Lidstaat;</i>
<i>Lidstaten;</i>
<i>International;</i>
<i>Internationaal;</i>

Table 4) Coding frame for content analysis

Coding frame			
Aspect	Critique	Preference indicators	Eurocepticism
1. Economic (Meijers, 2017)	1.1. Neoliberal (Statham & Trenz, 2013)	Less state intervention through enforcing rights for private property and capital, liberating markets, encouraging free trade, cuts in state expenditure (smaller state), and balancing budgets. (Eatwell, 1997; Harvey, 2007; Giddens; Verdun et al., 2023)	111 Absent 112 Soft 113 Hard (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002)
	1.2. Welfare distribution in terms of wealth and wellbeing (Hooghe et al., 2002; Kriesi et al., 2008; Fanning, 2021)	More state intervention (social liberalism) with regulated/social markets, supply-side economic management, individual welfare, and environmentalism, by efforts such as liberating entrepreneurial freedoms and skills, gender equality, and compliance with other individual rights. (Harvey, 2007; Giddens, 2013)	121 Absent 122 Soft 123 Hard (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002)
2. Cultural (Meijers, 2017)	2.1 Immigration (Bale et al., 2010; Van Spanje, 2010)	Openness towards migration by (reducing) state intervention on different flows of internal and external migration, including mobile and open non-discriminatory labour markets, integration and participation efforts, at least compliant with the single market principles of the EU. (Favell, 2014; Indelicato et al., 2023)	211 Absent 212 Soft 213 Hard (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002)
	2.2 National identity and sovereignty (Hooghe & Marks, 2009)	Efforts to maintain or increase internationalisation, including globalisation and Europeanisation, for instance, through bilateral/multilateral agreements, and compliance with international as well as European regulations, judiciary overruling, and enforcing the European and international legal order. (Meyerrose, 2021).	221 Absent 222 Soft 223 Hard (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002)

Table 5) Collected data

Data collection overview		
<i>Translated with DeepL translator</i>		
#	Data (filtered)	Code
2012		
1	The creditworthiness of the Netherlands is strong. To keep it that way, we need to make our financial sector sound, prepare for an ageing population and strengthen the economic structure. This means, besides stabilising the eurozone and structural reforms of the housing market, the labour market and our financial system, an ambitious growth agenda for our economy. (PvdA, 2012, p. 8)	
2	The cut in the national research budget (formerly from natural gas revenues) means that from 2015 we will have a total of 2,500 fewer PhD positions at Dutch universities and institutes. This will have to be made up as soon as possible to get back to the level of Germany and Switzerland in terms of public investment in scientific research. This is also of great importance for Dutch researchers to continue to participate well in EU research programmes and thus gain access to new knowledge. (PvdA, 2012, p. 10)	
3	The growth strategy also has implications for government policy and design. We must opt for strengthening regional cooperation around ‘talent towns’. Economic policy, new industrial policy and innovation policy are implemented by regional partnerships in which governments, knowledge institutes and the business community work closely together. All resources should serve a shared growth agenda. Making agreements with universities, other (educational) institutions and companies to which (in)direct research grants are awarded are provided that possible production activities resulting from these are preferably be localised domestically. (PvdA, 2012, p. 12)	
4	European policies aimed at economic development of regions must be radically adjusted. The spending of European funds must effectively promote growth. Resources are now not sufficiently available to SMEs and too much money still goes to maintaining unprofitable agricultural bulk production instead of, for example, financing of start-up new enterprises, or further developing sustainable energy technology. (PvdA, 2012, p. 12)	122
5	There needs to be European banking supervision. Banking supervision is primarily national and ‘bailing out’ banks is a national responsibility, while the big banks are international and the currency union is European. This situation is no longer tenable. Banking supervision should become European. Banks in the Eurozone should all be sufficiently capitalised and under effective supervision. Internationally, together with the other major trading blocs, the financial the financial sector should be regulated. (PvdA, 2012, p. 12)	121
6	To tackle youth unemployment, we will use European Structural Funds. (PvdA, 2012, p. 22)	121
7	In the European context, the Labour Party seeks to discourage flash capital, through a tax on financial transactions. Our pension funds are expressly exempted from this. (PvdA, 2012, p. 27)	122
8	The position of employees will be strengthened. National co-determination is brought up to date brought up to date for the international economy. Employees are given the right to international representation. The position of European Works Councils is strengthened. Works councils get right of consent in mergers and acquisitions. Companies are not commodities. (PvdA, 2012, p. 28)	122
9	Women are still underrepresented in senior positions. Introducing quotas will ensure women are better represented in governments and business. The Labour Party therefore believes that	121

	at least 30 per cent of the members of Boards of Directors, Supervisory Boards and Supervisory Boards should be women, a guideline to be laid down by law if necessary . (PvdA, 2021, p. 31)	
10	The Netherlands is also committed abroad to the acceptance of sexual minority rights and combating homophobia. The Netherlands considers discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation within the EU not acceptable. Therefore, the Netherlands should take a pioneering role within Europe to promote gay emancipation within European Union member states and far beyond. Discrimination based on sexual orientation is not allowed in the Netherlands. We therefore propose to anchor this in the constitution. In article 1 of the constitution, we add sexual orientation to the list of characteristics of people on which you may not be treated unequally. The Labour Party will work for the discussability of homosexuality in religious circles where it has traditionally been difficult to do so. (PvdA, 2012, p. 31)	221
11	Dual nationality has nothing to do with loyalty to the Netherlands, nor with an integration problem. There are, in all countries of the world, more and more people with multiple nationalities. Where that creates problems, they should be addressed. But it is up to people themselves to decide whether they drop their (old) nationality or want to keep it. The Netherlands, like many other countries did, should adapt its legislation accordingly. (PvdA, 2012, p. 32)	212
12	Rights of elderly migrants have been eroded on numerous fronts by the previous administration. We are reversing the discriminatory measure in the AWBZ of the previous Cabinet. This restricted reimbursement for long-term care to EU countries, which meant that people spending the winter in Torremolinos and become ill would have their healthcare costs reimbursed, but people who pay exactly the same premiums and need temporary care in, say, Turkey, Morocco or Suriname would not. A pure bullying measure that has no place in decent legislation. (PvdA, 2012, p. 32)	
13	Civic integration remains mandatory for migrants newly settling in the Netherlands for a long time and do not yet speak Dutch. The PvdA is in favour of age-independent compulsory education that also applies to Central and Eastern European migrants settling permanently in the Netherlands. (PvdA, 2012, p. 32)	212
14	Integration for refugees admitted remains entirely the responsibility of the government. Refugees, who receive protection in the Netherlands, should be able to make a good start in building a new life and be able to connect with Dutch society. This also includes that refugees should always be assured of social guidance for the first period, regardless of where they live. People who come to the Netherlands voluntarily pay themselves for civic integration. (PvdA, 2012, p. 33)	211
15	The huge influx of labour migrants from Central and Eastern Europe requires our special attention. The PvdA is in favour of selective admission of labour migrants. Opening our labour market to workers from new EU member states should not have a disruptive effect on Dutch society. Therefore, more attention should be paid to the social consequences for the neighbourhoods where new labour migrants settle. We pay close attention, locally and nationally, in compliance with rules, for instance with regard to overcrowding or evasion of the minimum wage. People must be prevented from being underpaid and from unfairly competing with the Dutch. (PvdA, 2012, p. 33)	212
16	Migrant workers from Central and Eastern Europe can also be expected to have a basic level of the Dutch language. (PvdA, 2012, p. 34)	211
17	The Labour Party supports a strict but fair admission policy for asylum seekers. People who are actually persecuted in their country should be able to count on protection from the Netherlands. In doing so, we stand firmly behind the Refugee Convention, human rights treaties and EU asylum directives. Protecting refugees means that they can apply for asylum,	211

	that they are not sent back to an unsafe country, that they are given the rights to be able to be full citizens as soon as possible and are given the chance to build a new life in the new country. (PvdA, 2012, p. 34)	
18	European court rulings on excessively high Dutch dues will obviously be implemented; these dues have to come down. (PvdA, 2012, p. 34)	221
19	Cooperation in Europe moves immigration policy forward. That is why we want equal European admission rules, jointly guarded external borders and humane reception in all EU Member States. We tackle fraud, abuse and illegality together; all member states take their responsibility here. (PvdA, 2012, p. 34)	212
20	An effective EU exchange of protection orders, proper implementation of the EU legislative proposal on this, can ensure that people, especially women, feel safe when travelling across borders throughout the EU. (PvdA, 2012, p. 35)	221
21	The European telecommunications data retention obligation requires telephone and internet providers to store for up to two years where citizens were and who contacted whom had. This infringes on the privacy and communications of millions of Dutch citizens. This rule does not make the Netherlands safer, and therefore needs to be abolished as soon as possible in Netherlands and in the rest of Europe. (PvdA, 2012, p. 39)	122
22	European regulations mean that people with incomes above about €34,000 are at risk of no longer qualifying for social housing. Even in areas where private supply is lacking, this is a problem. This rigid income limit is far too tight and puts many people in problems and therefore needs to be taken off the table. (PvdA, 2012, p. 42)	
23	The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has been signed by the Netherlands but has not yet entered into force. With this, the Netherlands is very much behind the rest of Europe. It must be ratified by 2014. (PvdA, 2012, p. 48)	221
24	Nuclear power is not part of the fully sustainable energy supply we seek for the Netherlands. We therefore oppose the new construction of a nuclear power plant in the Netherlands. The Netherlands is committed to using renewable energy sources in Europe to make nuclear energy unnecessary elsewhere as well. (PvdA, 2012, p. 51)	122
25	In the European context, the Labour Party advocates a super-high-voltage grid. This will ensure that power from wind turbines from the North Sea can go to southern Europe and power from Spanish solar panels can go to northern Europe. This will lead to investments in work and sustainability in Europe. policy is developed so that owners of rented housing and public authorities are obliged, and other owners are encouraged, to insulate their buildings within 15 years in accordance with the requirements for new-build homes in the 2003 Building Decree. (PvdA, 2012, p. 51)	122
26	The Netherlands has a lot of wetlands. And there are many opportunities there. Think of the plan for Markerwadden in the Markermeer, wet heath on the Dwingelderveld, or raised bog in De Peel. Nature areas can also be fully utilised to protect our country from high water. We invest in the quality of nature. The Programmatic Approach to Nitrogen will be implemented as soon as possible. Desiccation is taken seriously into account in water management in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and thus tackled more quickly. (PvdA, 2012, p. 52)	121
27	European agricultural subsidies will be reducing sharply. They will be used to pay farmers for 'green services', such as landscape management and nature conservation. (PvdA, 2012, p. 52)	122

28	<p>Accessibility is crucial for our economy and therefore essential for growth and fighting unemployment. For businesses, fast internet and good road, rail and waterways are crucial. Fast internet gives combining work and care an extra boost and can further reduce environmentally damaging commuter traffic. Public transport and the car should get us from A to B quickly, safely and reliably. All this in a densely populated country with the most finely-meshed road network and the busiest railway in Europe.</p> <p>(PvdA, 2012, p. 52)</p>	111
29	<p>Rail safety must be guaranteed again and train accidents must become a thing of the past. That is why the Labour Party advocates the accelerated introduction of the European rail safety system ERTMS.</p> <p>(PvdA, 2012, p. 53)</p>	121
30	<p>Aviation can be cleaner and more energy efficient. The Labour Party wants to phase out paraffin subsidies and introduce a paraffin tax at European level.</p> <p>(PvdA, 2012, p. 53)</p>	122
31	<p>The Labour Party attaches great importance to the protection of animal welfare. In recent years - partly on the initiative of the PvdA - animal welfare has been improved on many fronts. In the coming years, we will continue to work along these two lines. On the one hand by working closely with civil society organisations for animal protection and consumer interests and with the Dutch retail sector. On the other by making the Netherlands a leader in animal welfare and animal protection in a European and international context.</p> <p>(PvdA, 2012, p. 54)</p>	121
32	<p>Preventive use of antibiotics in animal husbandry must stop. We further reduce animal testing. The transport of animals across Europe must be greatly reduced and, where still necessary, comply with much stricter requirements so that abuses are eliminated. We maintain the system of compartmentalised animal rights until there are proven alternatives in terms of nature, environment, health and space that have the same effect.</p> <p>(PvdA, 2012, p. 54)</p>	221
33	<p>The Labour Party supports reducing European agricultural subsidies. We desperately need European farmers, but in a different way. Old income and export subsidies and the generous buy-up schemes must make way for European policy aimed at strengthening the countryside and making agriculture and livestock farming more sustainable. That is good for the landscape, ecology and biodiversity, and it prevents us from distorting the international trade in agricultural products. Developing countries in particular suffer greatly from this.</p> <p>(PvdA, 2012, p. 55)</p>	122
34	<p>In addition, sustainable initiatives from industry to preserve materials in the chain should be encouraged and scaled up. Measures aimed at encouraging reused materials in new products will also be promoted in Europe.</p> <p>(PvdA, 2012, p. 55)</p>	122
35	<p>The Labour Party strongly supports European cooperation. Europe brings us peace, freedom and prosperity. Now it gives us a chance to stand up together against fast money and short-sighted speculation with no regard for social consequences. Together, we can rein in the banks and bonuses and turn Europe back into a hopeful project that offers prospects to current and future generations. The importance of Europe for the Dutch economy and jobs cannot be stressed enough in these times of crisis. Further economic and political integration in the European Union is only possible if it is accompanied by an agenda focused on growth, social guarantees and democratic strengthening.</p> <p>(PvdA, 2012, p. 56)</p>	222
36	<p>Another problem is that today's Europe is too distanced of us, citizens. Especially since the Euro crisis, Europe is too much in the hands of government leaders with little influence from national parliaments and the European Parliament. This has to change if we want to restore trust in Europe. Too often, European countries still act separately in the world. If we want to do justice to Europe's strength in the world, we need to speak more with one voice. Nevertheless, further economic and political integration is only possible if it is accompanied</p>	222

	by a broader agenda aimed at socially and economically strengthening the EU. In short, it is time for a new Europe. (PvdA, 2012, p. 56)	
37	Europe is at a crossroads. An agenda is needed that balances growth, new investment and more jobs with responsible public finances. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	222
38	That means we spare purchasing power and restore consumer confidence by investing in a sustainable and fair economy. We strengthen Europe's social dimension by protecting public services from cold market forces, getting people into work faster and keeping wages up. We are committed to servicing financial markets and restoring stability and solidarity between countries in Europe. That also means putting treasuries in order in all member states. Social democrats across Europe support proposals that promote growth. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	222
39	The fiscal pact is too much of an accountants' tool, focusing too unilaterally on budget deficits and debt. There needs to be new Growth Pact: one that drives job creation and reforms in each member state. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	222
40	There is room within the Stability and Growth Pact to take into account countries' exceptional economic circumstances. The pact's main rule is that countries put their structural deficits in order, i.e. taking the business cycle into account. The Labour Party adheres to this and focuses on a fiscal policy that offers the prospect of a structurally balanced budget in 2017. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	111
41	We increase revenues of member states through a European action plan to fight tax fraud, flight and evasion. It is still too easy to evade tax due to lack of information exchange between member states. Tax havens and tax competition are tackled by seeking common agreements on profit taxation. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	122
42	We are fully committed to employment by releasing European funds to invest in training, research, innovation, energy efficiency, infrastructure and digitalisation. These investments are financed or guaranteed by relevant EU grant programmes the European Investment Bank, European project bonds, making better use of structural funds and the European Social Fund, and reallocating agricultural subsidies. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	121
43	Investments that benefit the development of green jobs and a sustainable [European] society will be prioritised. This crisis also presents us with an opportunity to make the economy ready for the future. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	122
44	All European member states must put their finances in order in the coming years. Therefore, the European budget must also come down. The Dutch contribution can be reduced and the Dutch net payment position should improve. The EU contribution cut of EUR 1 billion will be continued after 2013. The EU should cut spending, for instance by severely cutting the far too high salaries of European civil servants and the disproportionate allowances of MEPs. Moreover, abolishing the travelling circus from Strasbourg to Brussels could also save hundreds of millions. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	122
45	End market forces in national public services, such as health care and social housing. These sectors should be shielded from European single market rules. The same applies to pension systems. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	122
46	Protection of workers through agreements on minimum standards, including a (relative) minimum wage and freedom of association [in Europe]. (PvdA, 2012, p. 57)	122

47	Combating growing youth unemployment by sharing expertise on successful policies (Austria, The Netherlands and Finland) and setting up youth employment projects. Money for projects is released from the European Social Fund, which is currently under-spent. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	122
48	Wage dumping is unacceptable. Anyone working in The Netherlands should receive a decent salary according to Dutch standards, if applicable in accordance with the applicable collective agreement. Equal pay for equal work within member states. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	122
49	We counter exploitation of migrant workers and displacement through unfair competition on wages and other working conditions. The labour inspectorate must be fully committed to this. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	211
50	The Netherlands takes advantage of Europe's food surpluses to maintain supplies to food banks and ensure varied food packages. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	
51	Banking supervision should become European. Banks in the Eurozone should all be adequately capitalised and under effective supervision. Bonuses in the financial sector will be capped at 20% on top of fixed salary. This will apply not only to top executives, but to everyone working in the sector. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	122
52	The financial sector [within the European single market] will have to contribute to the costs of the financial crisis. To this end, we are introducing a financial transaction tax (FTT). Our pension funds will be explicitly exempted from this. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	122
53	In our Europe, Eurobonds could eventually be introduced. With Eurobonds, we can use the strength of the combined European economies to increase financial and economic stability. (PvdA, 2012, 58)	122
54	The financial and euro crisis have shown that problems at banks in other countries can easily spill over to other countries. Now supervision is organised nationally, but banks are very international and mainly European-focused. Bad supervision in another country thus leads to risks for the Dutch economy. We therefore strive for a European banking union and deposit guarantee scheme. That way, the financial sector will be better regulated and risks can be tackled where it is most effective. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	122
55	To ensure stability in the euro area, a strong and reliable emergency fund (European Stability Mechanism, ESM) is needed. The emergency fund provides loans to countries with major financial problems. Countries that want to use the emergency fund commit to reforms to put the economy in order. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	122
56	A more active role for the European Central Bank as a very last resort. The ECB can help finance the emergency fund or by buying up debt of countries in crisis. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	122
57	The Euro is of great importance to the Netherlands. For a stable Euro, the Eurozone countries must converge economically and financially and public finances must be put in order. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	122
58	Decisions about financial markets and the economy are also political decisions, decisions with major consequences for common people in common neighbourhoods. Europe is not just a responsibility of politicians in Brussels. National politicians should be more involved, act as watchdogs and contribute to politicising the debate in and about Europe. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	222
59	It is time to seriously work on the democratisation of the European Union. In the future, the European Commission should reflect the outcome of European elections. This will give a vote in European elections real meaning. At the same time, the position of member states must be safeguarded. (PvdA, 2012, p. 58)	222

60	Better coordination and make emergency aid and development cooperation more coherent , so that money is better spent and national and European policies complement and reinforce each other . (PvdA, 2012, p. 60)	122
61	An ambitious neighbourhood policy towards neighbouring countries in the Arab region, including significant economic benefits for those countries and assistance in building the rule of law. (PvdA, 2012, p. 60)	222
62	In the other neighbouring countries in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, the EU also continues to invest in transformation processes , for instance by strengthening the economy and democratic rule of law. (PvdA, 2012, p. 60)	221
63	The Netherlands and the EU respect the commitments made with the countries of south-eastern Europe and Turkey. With any accession, countries must fully meet the conditions and the EU itself must also be ready for new accessions . (PvdA, 2012, p. 60)	222
64	We help emerging companies and local food producers in developing countries by opening the European market to them . They themselves are free to choose to gradually liberalise their own markets. (PvdA, 2012, p. 62)	221
65	The Netherlands is against tax evasion by multinationals and is committed on a(n) (inter)national level. (PvdA, 2012, p. 62)	221
66	To combat human trafficking and child pornography, EU member states need to cooperate more closely . In addition to criminal provisions, this requires more attention to prevention and the protection of victims. (PvdA, 2012, p. 62)	222
67	Within the Netherlands and in the EU context , a significant expansion of vice police and investigative capacity to combat sexual abuse and sex tourism. (PvdA, 2012, p. 62)	222
68	The Labour Party stands firmly for human rights, the rule of law and democracy . We let this resonate throughout our foreign policy. (PvdA, 2012, p. 63)	221
69	Children's rights are an integral part of our human rights and foreign policy because it makes our investments more equitable, sustainable and efficient. The Netherlands is not hypocritical. We denounce human rights violations, regardless of the country where they take place . The Netherlands is also committed abroad to accepting the rights of sexual minorities and fighting homophobia. International commitment to combating violence against women during conflicts is very necessary. Sexual violence in particular is used against women as a weapon of war. Women's shelter and bringing perpetrators to justice is very important here. Citizen activists, civil society organisations and political parties are actively supported. After all, the basis for democracy lies in the countries themselves. This is especially true for emerging economies, where poverty is a distribution issue and where Dutch bilateral aid is being phased out. And there is no democracy without the rule of law . (PvdA, 2012, p. 63)	221
70	The Netherlands adheres to the Refugee Convention, human rights treaties and EU asylum directives and has a humane asylum policy. We consider the situation in the country of origin and personal traumas in asylum requests. Refugees are not criminals. That is why we develop alternatives to immigration detention and reverse criminalisation of illegal residence (via the entry ban). (PvdA, 2012, p. 63)	211
71	The UN Security Council needs to be ushered into the 21st century. The veto power must be curtailed. Developing countries deserve stronger representation. And France and Britain should give up their permanent seats for one permanent EU vote .	221

	(PvdA, 2012, p. 64)	
72	Netherlands stops unilateral support for Israel in Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We will get back in line with Europe and better use our good ties with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to support the peace process. (PvdA, 2012, p. 64)	223
73	The Netherlands acts in EU and UN contexts around major international crises, such as the nuclear threat from Iran, the escalation of violence in Syria and the faltering of democratisation in the Arab region. (PvdA, 2012, p. 64)	221
74	In the NATO context, the Netherlands actively pursues the further reduction of tactical nuclear weapons and, in consultation with other EU countries, takes the initiative towards the United States on the short-term removal of these nuclear weapons from the Netherlands. However, The Netherlands remains an active NATO member and commits to its international responsibilities. We conduct international peacekeeping missions according to the Dutch model. Here, it is not the military approach that is leading, but the political construction, development work and peacebuilding, with attention to human rights and involving women in decision-making processes. Military personnel, within international and national guidelines, are given the trust and freedom to carry out their task. (PvdA, 2012, p. 63-64)	221
75	Commodities, such as coal, sometimes serve as a source of funding for wars. Importing this blood coal will be punishable. The Netherlands is taking the lead to regulate this in Europe and globally as well. (PvdA, 2012, p. 64)	122
76	The main task of the Navy is to secure and guarantee transport by sea in the EU and NATO context and guard trade routes worldwide. A modern armed force requires such a high level of investment that this should not be a national but an international ambition. Task specialisation and economies of scale across borders are necessary. (PvdA, 2012, p. 64)	111
77	The Labour Party is in favour of far-reaching European defence cooperation. The Netherlands actively participates in consultations on this in NATO and the European Union. In the short term, this should lead to the pooling of existing capabilities and a greater focus in mutual consultation on those tasks where we have added value compared to other countries. (PvdA, 2012, p. 64)	221
78	The entire Cabinet pays attention to fair trade, good management of scarce resources, peace, security, human rights, rule of law, democracy, good management of scarce resources, climate change mitigation and promotes the deployment and development of renewable energy. The one billion poorest of the poor must have a voice in the Council of Ministers. There will be a minister for international cooperation. The Netherlands will appoint a team of sustainability diplomats, who will lobby within the EU and international institutions for sustainable policies on global common goods, climate change and green economy. (PvdA, 2012, p. 67)	222
79	The Labour Party strives for a strong society and a strong democracy, in which citizens and communities help shape public affairs and in which citizens can effectively influence governance. In small in the neighbourhood, at work, at school and in large on municipal, Dutch and European policy (PvdA, 2012, p. 67)	222
80	The Frisian language - like the Dutch language - is a recognised European language and both deserve recognition in the Dutch constitution. (PvdA, 2012, p. 69)	221
81	The islands of Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba also belong to the Netherlands. The process of bringing the islands directly under Dutch rule is not going well despite all efforts. The Labour Party wants to improve this by making better use of local knowledge. Solutions are too often sought through European-Dutch glasses. What can be done locally should be done locally. Furthermore, the Minister of the Interior must take firm control, on his behalf locally by the	222

	state representative. This is the only way to prevent all ministries separately with all their officials simultaneously implementing their plans. Fruitful cooperation is sought with a minimum of intercontinental travel. The PvdA wants to quickly turn the false start into a successful trajectory towards increased prosperity on the BES islands. (PvdA, 2012, p. 69-70)	
82	Our excellent name in arts and design has a favourable effect on foreign trade contacts and tourism in our country. To strengthen the Netherlands' cultural image across borders, tighter direction on international cultural policy is needed. (PvdA, 2012, p. 73)	
83	The financial sector is being restructured. Banks contribute to the cost of the crisis; bank taxes are raised. To tackle reckless flash capital, social democrats across Europe are pushing for a financial transaction tax . Pension funds are exempted from this. Bonuses will be curbed. (PvdA, 2012, p. 76)	122
2017		
84	International cooperation, in the EU, NATO and the UN, is imperative to support human rights, peace and security, democracy and economic prosperity. (PvdA, 2017, p. 8)	221
85	Integration is most likely to succeed when people from diverse backgrounds meet in the neighbourhood where they live, at school and at the sports club. That is why we want to continue investing in mixed neighbourhoods with a range of housing for diverse groups and in accessible public spaces where there is room for everyone. We invest in mixed and broad schools, in sports, culture and clubs and in neighbourhood facilities such as libraries. (PvdA, 2017, p. 12)	211
86	For new Dutch citizens , integration starts with an explicit choice to live in the Netherlands. To that end, learning the language is a prerequisite for participation . Knowledge of the language makes people independent, allows them to meet and get to know each other and provides opportunities. That is why we want to invest in learning the Dutch language, appropriate to the level a person has. In civic integration, we want to introduce more customisation, for example for course participants who are low-literate. From now on, the costs of civic integration need not be borne by the course participant alone; if this is financially necessary, we will contribute. (PvdA, 2017, p. 12)	211
87	We want to greatly improve the quality and success rate of civic integration through a better link between civic integration education and regular education. Preferably, we organise civic integration education at regular educational institutions. Special attention is given to older migrants who still have a way to go with their integration in the Netherlands . (PvdA, 2017, p. 12)	211
88	Many people from non-Dutch backgrounds feel hurt by derogatory generalisations and disqualifications. We want to actively combat this. This starts with better awareness of the existence of prejudice, hidden racism and 'everyday' discrimination [in The Netherlands] . If necessary, we tighten laws against discrimination and racism . We want more commitment to fighting discrimination through more specialised police officers and better enforcement. We also want to improve access of victims of discrimination to the police. (PvdA, 2017, p. 12-13)	221
89	We are going to treat racism as a hate crime, thereby increasing the penalties for perpetrators. We want to give police and prosecutors more scope to track down and prosecute perpetrators of racism and discrimination [in The Netherlands] . (PvdA, 2017, p. 13)	221
90	We want a culture change in the police and other public services to counter ethnic profiling [in The Netherlands] . This can be done through better selection, using proven effective solutions from abroad such as stop forms, more training and knowledge in the police force. (PvdA, 2017, p. 13)	221

91	<p>Firm enforcement on labour market discrimination is necessary, whether on age, gender, origin, disability or sexual orientation. We are expanding the capacity of inspectorates. We want to increase willingness to report by making it clear that it makes sense to report. We want more awareness on prejudice among employers and employment agencies, We expect the government to lead by example, we advocate ‘naming and shaming’ of the worst offenders. (PvdA, 2017, p. 13)</p>	211
92	<p>We want institutions such as the police, the UWV, education and healthcare institutions, to be a recognisable reflection of the diversity of our society. We want to create transparency about the ethnic diversity of our common institutions. (PvdA, 2017, p. 13)</p>	211
93	<p>It is unacceptable for people to be refused entry to entertainment venues and clubs based on their appearance. There will be low-threshold online hotlines through which the authority, mayor and police can deal with offenders. Those who go too far can lose their operating licences. (PvdA, 2017, p. 13)</p>	211
94	<p>We want to include a legal ban on transgender discrimination in the General Equal Treatment Act. We want to make sexual diversity education compulsory everywhere in education. We want strong enforcement on sexual diversity education and spotting bullying behaviour in all schools. As far as we are concerned, this is part of teacher training. LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex) asylum seekers deserve our full support. We want Dutch asylum granting policy to maintain explicit attention to, and focus on, LGBT activists and refugees. If it turns out that their safety cannot otherwise be guaranteed, LGBT asylum seekers and other vulnerable groups should be able to be received separately and safely. Victims should be given the protection they need and perpetrators should be dealt with. Address bullying behaviour against new Dutch citizens, gays, lesbians, Muslims, or anyone else more effectively, for example by allowing the mayor to more quickly evict a bully or impose a neighbourhood ban. Positively value participants in government tenders who demonstrably seek to reflect society in their personnel policies in the process of awarding contracts. Employees of employment and placement agencies will be required to report statements that tend towards discrimination and exclusion to anti-discrimination facilities of the municipality. (PvdA, 2017, p. 13)</p>	211
95	<p>Emancipation affects everyone, male, female, religious, secular, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and people with disabilities. Since emancipation is also the liberation of individuals and groups who suffer from oppression, we want the government to actively support emancipation movements of these groups. For more than a century, we are committed to gender equality. Much has been achieved, but full equality of treatment between men and women is still not there. For instance, women are underrepresented in senior positions. Where the government has taken meaningful steps, the business community is agonisingly slow in moving to meet the requirement that at least 30 per cent of the members of Boards of Directors, Supervisory Boards and Supervisory Boards must be women. We think it is now time for a quota to enforce this by law. The public sector (universities, healthcare institutions, housing associations and others) will also have enforceable standards for more top women. The Netherlands will be in the top five of the Global Gender Index within five years. We want to make it possible for women and men who have not been able to complete their secondary education to do so. This is good for personal development and increasing self-awareness. Following the example of other countries, we want to involve the business community in increasing acceptance of new Dutch and LGBT people in the workplace. We encourage acceptance in associations and at companies by actively supporting alliances such as the ‘gay-straight alliances’. These are demonstrably successful in eliminating prejudice. We want role models and ambassadors to promote acceptance of sexual diversity in their own circles. The focus here is on making it discussable in conservative religious circles; this increases acceptance for the most vulnerable groups who often lose their family ties and social network when coming out. We want to achieve greater acceptance of transgender people by providing</p>	221

	information and increasing sensitivity towards transgender people among, for example, the police. This increases the willingness to report discrimination. Transgender people are entitled to reimbursement of medical transformation costs. (PvdA, 2017, p. 13-14)	
96	It is our moral duty in Europe to help key reception countries such as Jordan and Lebanon. We do this through emergency aid, care, food, education and resettlement of refugees. The PvdA stands firmly behind the UN Refugee Convention. As far as we are concerned, Europe remains hospitable towards refugees based on compassion and the universal right to protection. We do make a clear distinction between economic migrants and people fleeing war, persecution, etc. Economic migrants have no right to asylum. (PvdA, 2017, p. 16)	211
97	The refugee issue is a European issue that requires a common European solution. Only then can we offer refugees a safe home. Our reception capacity is not limitless. We believe that ensuring humane reception of refugees is a shared responsibility of all countries in the European Union. Together, we can ensure that people who have had to leave their homes because of repression or war can build a new life, either in neighbouring countries or in Europe. We are therefore in favour of a fair distribution of refugees reaching Europe. (PvdA, 2017, p. 16)	212
98	We want the situation for refugees in refugee countries like Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan to improve. Due to the huge size of the refugee flow in these host countries, reception both inside and outside refugee camps is often sub-standard and lacks any prospect of work, education and a somewhat normal life. Therefore, we invest in these countries to provide better facilities and work for refugees and ensure that these resources reach the right place. Besides general emergency aid, the Netherlands focuses in particular on helping children, women and vulnerable minorities. Better quality reception and better future prospects in countries with the most refugees also means that refugees are less likely to feel the need to make the dangerous journey to Europe via people smugglers. Development cooperation funds are hereby used for offering future prospects, not for strengthening migration management and reinforcing border controls. (PvdA, 2017, p. 17)	212
99	We want more safe and legal refugee routes by focusing on increased resettlement through UNHCR of vulnerable refugees from countries of first asylum to Europe. The Netherlands is leading the way here and setting a good example. (PvdA, 2017, p. 17)	212
100	We want to conclude treaties at European level with countries in Africa and the Middle East to give refugees more prospects, and to allow migrants who are not fleeing war or persecution, and therefore have no right to asylum, to return to their countries of origin. The conclusion of such treaties should not stand in the way of a critical attitude towards the human rights situation. (PvdA, 2017, p. 17)	212
101	We want all European countries to adopt the same asylum policy and for refugees arriving in Europe to be distributed fairly among EU countries. We want to crack down firmly on EU countries that do not cooperate in this by giving them fewer EU subsidies. (PvdA, 2017, p. 17)	212
102	European cooperation is also needed to tackle human traffickers. We want Interpol to prioritise this and we want more investigative capacity to bust human trafficking gangs and freeze their assets. (PvdA, 2017, p. 17)	212
103	We support knowledge migration, as long as it does not displace Dutch workers and does not contribute to the brain drain in developing countries. (PvdA, 2017, p. 17)	212
104	We see an important role for the diaspora (active Dutch citizens with a migration background) in the Netherlands to contribute to development in countries of origin. This includes contributing to peace negotiations, sharing knowledge about cultural and social conditions	211

	and customs within the population and politics, stimulating reconstruction and creating employment by, for example, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises. We want to encourage this involvement as soon as possible after arrival in the Netherlands by, among other things, creating more space for involving diaspora in the development of their country of origin in Dutch migration and development policies. (PvdA, 2017, p. 17)	
105	We will better safeguard the position and rights of children in the Aliens Act, so that the individual rights of the child are taken seriously and their interests can be weighed separately by the courts. These are children whose well-being, development or health will be at stake if they have to return to their parents' country. For all children in the asylum procedure, whether they eventually stay in the Netherlands or not, we want to create a 'home' as soon as possible. Children should be given school and the opportunity to make friends and be children as soon as possible. The Labour Party strongly supports the Refugee Convention and the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. Rooted children whose parents have applied for residence (asylum or regular humanitarian) have been in the country for five years and whose parents were available for return are eligible for a child pardon. Procedures must be faster and more efficient, and hopeless further proceedings by both parents and the IND must be prevented. Abuse, such as withholding passports or committing identity fraud, must not be allowed to pay, and crime must be dealt with severely. This requires extra manpower and resources for reception, procedure, guidance and deportation. Children who are born stateless on Dutch soil should obtain Dutch nationality. (PvdA, 2017, p. 19)	221
106	Better cooperation of security services at European level against terrorism is needed to make an even stronger fist against international insecurity. Intelligence services may make additional investments in more capacity and new technology. (PvdA, 2017, p. 21)	222
107	We focus on the fight against IS and related organisations. That is currently the biggest terrorist threat to Europe. (PvdA, 2017, p. 21)	221
108	The Labour Party adheres to the European Convention on Human Rights at all times. Even when it comes to fighting terrorism. (PvdA, 2017, p. 21)	221
109	We want the government's responsibility for responsible fiscal policy to include the interests of low unemployment. Here, balancing public finances in the medium term is important. In the short term, there should be room for additional investment in our country's economic growth and economic stability to achieve low unemployment. The government does this by pursuing a counter-cyclical fiscal policy. Support for this counter-cyclical fiscal policy is also created in the European context. (PvdA, 2017, p. 24)	212
110	We want to radically adapt European policies aimed at economic development of regions. European subsidies should start promoting sustainable growth and stop supporting unprofitable and polluting sectors such as bulk agricultural production and Polish lignite mining. (PvdA, 2017, p. 25)	122
111	We want to keep Europe's toughest bonus legislation intact. (PvdA, 2017, p. 25)	121
112	We want to complete the banking union by introducing a self-financed European deposit guarantee scheme (DGS), so that governments are not tempted to bail out failing banks under pressure from savers. By introducing a European DGS, we ensure that the European banking union rests firmly on three pillars in addition to European supervision and a European support fund. This does require that bank balance sheets be put further in order first. The entanglement between banks and governments must also be further broken. Government bonds should therefore be given a fairer weighting in European and international financial	122

	regulation. The proportion of government bonds on a bank's balance sheet should also be capped. (PvdA, 2017, p. 25)	
113	We want banks to separate their risky investment banking activities from utility activities. This European legislation should be introduced soon. Banks' risk models need to set hard lower limits on capital, known as capital floors. (PvdA, 2017, p. 25)	122
114	Globalisation only works if everyone benefits from it. We therefore want to support trade agreements only if they are inclusive and ensure improvement for all. That means we will not agree to trade treaties like TTIP unless they promote continuous improvement for the position of workers, global standards for sustainability, environment, health and labour for access to justice and fair product information, and fighting inequality and tax evasion. This is the only way to create a 'race to the top' rather than 'a race to the bottom'. To ensure that multinationals, now often the only ones to benefit from trade agreements, also start contributing fairly, trade agreements should always be accompanied by tough agreements to tackle tax avoidance. (PvdA, 2017, p. 26)	222
115	Compliance with trade treaties should be done in the normal rule of law that can properly weigh the public interest and not through specially created 'trade tribunals' that can claim millions of claims from governments on behalf of investors. The rewards at the top of business are out of whack. We want a reasonable ratio between rewards at the top and the lowest pay groups to be restored. Companies should publish the pay ratio between the top and lowest incomes. Works councils should be given the right of consent on this. Works councils should also be given the right of consent in strategic decisions such as takeovers or mergers. This can prevent a company from becoming prey to a private equity firm that wants to plunder it. The gender pay gap should disappear. We want to legislate this. We want to ban through legislation the sale and import of products made with child labour. The long-term perspective at companies is undermined by excesses of private equity parties and by activist shareholders. These hound companies to divest or sell parts without regard to the interests of employees or customers. Healthy companies eventually go bust as a result. The PvdA continues to fight the excesses of this Anglo-Saxon shareholder capitalism: - The investor, not the taxpayer, should be the biggest risk bearer; - Excessive debt financing and the weakening of companies' balance sheets are restricted; - Employee influence is increased; - The costs and revenue model of private equity parties must become transparent. A sustainable economy that takes into account people, ecology and social values does not come about by itself. We propose that companies start reporting on pay relations within the company, on fair trade and sustainability in their production, and on their social and environmental performance. The social enterprise will be enabled as a separate form of business. A healthy business community benefits from engaged employees. In recent years, the profits and remuneration of employees of multinational companies in particular have been increasingly out of whack. We want to reverse that trend. This can be done in the first place through higher wages. We want to achieve this through agreements with employers and employees. Secondly, profit-sharing schemes contribute to a stronger bond between companies and their employees. Third, in the case of excess profits - when companies buy back shares or pay out super dividends - we want to lay down by law that employees are also entitled to a share. After all, they made these excess profits possible. (PvdA, 2017, p. 26)	222
116	We want the Paris climate agreement to feed through into more ambitious European targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, with corresponding targets for energy saving and renewable energy. We want a maximum temperature increase of 2°C and we aim for a maximum of 1.5°C. For Europe and the Netherlands, this means a reduction target of 55 per cent by 2030 and 95 per cent by 2050. The government anchors these ambitious targets in the Climate Act. This way, we give the necessary long-term certainty to investors and society. (PvdA, 2017, p. 27)	122

117	The Netherlands must become a frontrunner in smart energy grids in which renewable energy generated by private individuals can be imported and purchased without problems. We want to take the lead in developing and rolling out a European energy grid to handle large amounts of power, for instance from offshore wind in north-western Europe or solar plants from southern Europe. In this context, The Netherlands should initiate energy storage projects of its own. (PvdA, 2017, p. 27)	122
118	Investment in sustainable technology only becomes promising when CO2 emissions actually have a price. The current European emissions trading system is not yet functioning sufficiently and improvements (tightening targets, cutting off avoidance opportunities) could take years. The Labour Party does not want to wait for that and wants to introduce a minimum price for CO2 as soon as possible, in consultation with our neighbouring countries Germany, Belgium, France and Denmark. This 'North Sea coalition for energy transition' can also cooperate in other areas, such as offshore wind farms. Demonstrably sensitive industries to carbon leakage, such as steel, are spared CO2 pricing. Should efforts by the US and China, despite Paris, still not be in line with those of the EU, we are committed to CO2 border charges. (PvdA, 2017, p. 27)	122
119	European standards for cars will be further tightened so that only emission-free new passenger cars, motorbikes, mopeds and scooters will be sold by 2025. (PvdA, 2017, p. 28)	122
120	We aim to reform the Common European Agricultural Policy by 2020 with higher quality standards. We replace direct income support for farmers with subsidies linked to achieving social tasks such as sustainability, nature conservation, health and animal welfare. Part of the agriculture budget can also be used for innovation to make our food supply future-proof. This way, we work towards an agriculture that fits the challenges for the 21st century. (PvdA, 2017, p. 29)	122
121	The Netherlands must strictly implement European fisheries legislation without delay. Fishing rights will henceforth be distributed on the basis of transparent, social and ecological criteria that reward and encourage sustainable fishing. This way, we reward innovative fishermen. We want to combat overfishing in our inland waters. (PvdA, 2017, p. 29)	121
122	Improving animal welfare is in the interest of animals, but also a social and economic interest. Farmers must be able to prove that their animals have had a good life. We want to amend regulations so that farmers are obliged to monitor and improve animal welfare by modern means. We set stricter fire safety requirements for existing stables. To avoid unnecessary transport of animals for slaughter, slaughter in the Netherlands becomes the starting point. Where this does not happen, European regulations will be put in place to ban live animal transports lasting longer than eight hours. (PvdA, 2017, p. 30)	122
123	We want to end labour migration as a business model based on cost differences between foreign workers and Dutch colleagues. To this end, the Posting of Workers Directive will be tightened and the A1 certificate will be revamped. (PvdA, 2017, p. 32)	212
124	For areas on the German and Belgian border, a regional labour market is cross-border. We want to encourage jobseekers living in the Netherlands to find jobs more easily in Germany and Belgium. International regulations and agreements should remove barriers for jobseekers as much as possible. (PvdA, 2017, p. 33)	111
125	We want to achieve that every working person has an income to live on. That is why self-employed workers who do a job for others also get the protection of the minimum wage, including compensation for social insurance. We also adapt (European) competition rules to allow them to make collective rate agreements. We prohibit tenders below the level of the minimum wage plus compensation for social insurance.	122

	(PvdA, 2017, p. 34)	
126	We want to abolish the so-called extraterritorial ('expat') scheme. There is no justification for foreign workers paying substantially less tax than Dutch ones. If foreign expertise is scarce, employers and employment agencies hiring foreign workers should pay for it themselves. (PvdA, 2017, p. 37)	212
127	The international race to the bottom in profit taxation must stop. The Netherlands must commit to a blacklist of tax havens, public reporting per country on profit tax paid by multinationals. Furthermore, we are committed to a uniform European basis for profit determination and a European minimum profit tax rate. (PvdA, 2017, p. 38)	122
128	By introducing a carbon tax, we want to put a floor in the emissions trading system (ETS) and create space to encourage green innovations. (PvdA, 2017, p. 38)	122
129	We want to control the cost of expensive drugs and limit the power of the pharmaceutical industry. To this end, procurement should be done nationally and with other countries. We will make pricing transparent. The costs of development, production of drugs and a fair profit margin, become guiding factors in pricing, rather than what society is willing to pay for a drug. We recalculate drug limits and adjust the law on drugs. In doing so, we ensure sufficient alternatives remain available without additional payment. We also encourage the use of alternatives proven abroad, such as biosimilars. We stop double payment for medicines. Medicines developed through government funding are no longer sold to a single pharmacist, creating a monopoly position. The price of the licence to produce and sell the medicine is set in advance and any company that can produce the medicine according to the safety and quality requirements, can bid. In this way, the power of pharma companies is curtailed. There is also an active push to make this a European policy. (PvdA, 2017, p. 48)	122
130	Children should be taught the importance of healthy eating from an early age. European money previously used for business investment is now to be used for food education, so that young children are introduced to healthy eating at an early age. There will be a legal ban on unhealthy advertising and marketing aimed at children. (PvdA, 2017, p. 51)	122
131	In the European context, more commitment is needed to rules for less sugar, salt, artificial additives and saturated fats in our food. We want to make conclusive agreements for healthier food with the food industry. (PvdA, 2017, p. 51)	122
132	Following and responding to Germany, we want to tax freight transport with a Maut charge. These charges mainly hit abroad. The existing Eurovignette could then be abolished. As part of paying fairly for mobility, agricultural traffic using public roads will also pay road tax. (PvdA, 2017, p. 57)	122
133	Together with the provinces, we want to invest in safe roads. This is necessary because, relatively speaking, most traffic casualties occur on provincial roads. We will bring all regional and national roads to at least 3-star level in 10 years in accordance with the EURAP methodology. (PvdA, 2017, p. 57)	121
134	KLM is of great importance to Schiphol and the Dutch economy. We want to combat unfair competition for KLM by taking measures at EU level against those companies that thwart KLM with state aid. (PvdA, 2017, p. 57)	122
135	We want to fully comply with European obligations arising from the Birds and Habitats Directives. Specifically, we want a National Programme to counter the decline of the meadow bird and restore its population. (PvdA, 2017, p. 58)	121
136	The biggest pollution occurs at sea and in the air. Fuel for ships is often highly toxic because no national control of these toxins is possible on the high seas. We advocate the inclusion of	122

	aviation and shipping in the global climate treaty and worldwide maximum requirements for toxic substances in aviation and shipping fuel. In the European context, we want a European paraffin tax and progressive emission standards for ships. Nationally, we support initiatives from the transport sector to green inland shipping. (PvdA, 2017, p. 58)	
137	We want to work at EU level to ban the unnecessary use of endocrine disruptors in products and the environment. (PvdA, 2017, p. 58)	122
138	The EU must become an ally of people again by focusing on really important issues, such as promoting security through good work and managing the flow of refugees. We also work to put our own house in order by protecting the rule of law and human rights in the EU. (PvdA, 2017, p. 60)	222
139	Prevention is better than cure. That is why we primarily want to combat the root causes of potential conflicts through development, promoting good governance and strengthening rule of law. Sustaining fledgling peace is a long-term task that requires investment in reconstruction, supporting inclusive societies and state-building. We choose to have a long-term presence in countries where that fledgling peace is emerging, through a UN, EU or NATO mission, through development programmes, or through a combination. (PvdA, 2017, p. 61)	222
140	Political or economic pressure, or sometimes even military intervention, may be necessary to achieve a political solution, provided it is embedded in a peace strategy. The Netherlands will only participate in military missions if there is a solid international legal basis for doing so, preferably based on a UN Security Council resolution. Not only far away, but also close to home in the Netherlands and on NATO's external border, the threats are increasing. Especially in these times, we therefore choose an armed force that is well equipped to participate in the collective defence of NATO territory, peacekeeping missions abroad and contributions to national security and crisis management in the Netherlands. (PvdA, 2017, p. 61)	222
141	In negotiations on the Brexit, the Netherlands will demand new fair rules of the game for workers in Europe. (PvdA, 2017, p. 61)	212
142	We want to strengthen international defence cooperation. Together with other countries or in EU, NATO or UN contexts, we can do more than alone and can share tasks. Defence cooperation in Europe takes shape through cooperation in regional clusters and through European coordination to monitor the strategic capabilities of member states and Europe as a whole. (PvdA, 2017, p. 61)	222
143	We want to maintain sanctions against Russia as long as Russia does not stop destabilising eastern Ukraine and does not fulfil the commitments of the Minsk agreement. Sanctions against Crimea will be maintained as long as the illegal annexation of the peninsula continues. Instead, contacts with Russian civil society will be promoted wherever possible and human rights defenders supported. We prefer to use boycotts and sanctions in a targeted manner, for example against persons responsible for human rights violations. We do this by refusing entry visas or freezing bank deposits. (PvdA, 2017, p. 61 & 63)	221
144	We favour an active and political role for the European Union in the Middle East peace process. Within that framework, encouraging a constructive attitude on both sides, recognition of the Palestinian state and stopping the construction of illegal settlements in the occupied territories are indispensable. If parties structurally fail to cooperate in the peace process, pressure should be stepped up, for instance by reconsidering Israel's Association Agreement with the EU. (PvdA, 2017, p. 61)	222
145	The Dutch approach to terrorism, in which radicalism is spotted early in the capillaries of society, has so far been effective. We share this experience internationally. We want	222

	cooperation between European security services to exchange information to be more compulsory, otherwise it will not be effective. (PvdA, 2017, p. 61)	
146	We want the Netherlands to lead by example in the fight against illegal and controversial weapons. We must be open and honest about the presence of nuclear weapons on our territory. In the NATO context, we aim to remove all tactical nuclear weapons and support the start of negotiations on a global ban on nuclear weapons. (PvdA, 2017, p. 61)	222
147	We want the Netherlands to push for a stricter EU arms export policy. For repressive regimes like Saudi Arabia, which violates human rights and commits war crimes, we want a blanket export ban. We support the current strict interpretation of European arms export rules applied in the Netherlands. (PvdA, 2017, p. 63)	122
148	In particular, the Netherlands has a pioneering role to play when it comes to the rights of women, children, LGBT and human rights defenders. Journalists, who are increasingly at risk worldwide, can also count on our support. (PvdA, 2017, p. 63)	221
2021		
149	We want to stop unfair competition. Employers should never misuse differences in premiums and tax schemes as a business model at the expense of protecting workers. With a European ban on premium hopping and adjustment of tax rules (such as the ET scheme) we counteract social dumping. The employer is obliged to demonstrate that he/she pays the same wage costs, pension contributions and social security contributions and thus does not gain any cost advantage. (PvdA, 2021, p. 11)	121
150	We end the abuse of people posted across borders. We prevent temporary work agencies from juggling workers' employment rights. The European Temporary Agency Directive must be revised to separate the wheat from the chaff in the temporary agency sector. An EU colleague is welcome, but migrant workers should also be assured of decent conditions and accommodation, with equal pay for equal work. In all circumstances. (PvdA, 2021, p. 12)	212
151	Decent working conditions for migrant workers. Migrant workers have too often become the plaything of companies looking to produce as cheaply as possible. Industries like slaughterhouses and distribution centres where it is regularly found that the right of migrant workers is not taken seriously can be required, just as now in Germany, to work only with people who are directly employed. (PvdA, 2021, p. 12)	211
152	Good housing for migrant workers. Housing for migrant workers is too often poorly priced and insecure due to employer dependency. That is why we want rental rights for migrant workers. They will get a temporary rental contract that cannot be terminated just like that and there will be an obligation to certify housing. (PvdA, 2021, p. 12)	211
153	A fair job opportunity. Discrimination in the labour market is still far too common. This is unacceptable. We tackle racism and discrimination head-on, with heavy fines and more possibilities for the labour inspectorate to take action. (PvdA, 2021, p. 12)	211
154	Comprehensive Welfare comes first in the national budget. Especially in bad times, the government invests. This way, we prevent unemployment from rising unnecessarily, facilities and services remain intact and the economy and society are ready for the future. The European budgetary rules have become increasingly complicated in recent years and did not allow the government to play an important role in a crisis. New agreements will therefore be made in Europe on responsible public finances. These will give governments room to invest	112

	in a fair and decent economy with enough jobs. When it comes to investments, Comprehensive Welfare comes first; it is not only Gross Domestic Product that is leading. (PvdA, 2021, p. 15)	
155	In tenders, the focus is not on cost but on the quality of work. Current competition and procurement rules are written from a sacred belief in neoliberal market thinking. In this, citizens are reduced to consumers. Those with the most economic power often draw the longest straw. Not quality, but costs are central. This must change. We want changes to European procurement and competition rules that put people and planet first and not the market. This way, good working conditions and sustainability requirements are also taken into account. (PvdA, 2021, p. 15)	122
156	A European minimum profit tax rate. We end the race to the bottom on taxes. The corporate tax base becomes the same in Europe. This will eliminate opportunities for tax avoidance in Europe. Companies can no longer play off member states against each other. International companies will publicly disclose country by country where they operate, how much profit they make and how much tax they pay. The proceeds will reduce the burden on workers and social entrepreneurs. (PvdA, 2021, p. 16)	122
157	Banks serve society. In the financial crisis, taxpayers had to step in to cushion the irresponsible risks of banks and investors. Never again. Banks are still allowed to lend out every euro on their balance sheet 25 times over. The Rutte III government has even relaxed the buffer requirements. That is unwise and risky. We want to increase buffers to 10 per cent of capital. We are further tightening bonus legislation. Salary increases at the top keep pace with collective bargaining wages. The bank tax goes up so banks contribute more to public finances. With the completion of the banking union, it will now be the investor who pays when banks threaten to collapse, not the taxpayer. Banks separate their risky investment banking activities from utility activities. (PvdA, 2021, p. 16)	122
158	More room for collective claim settlement. The settlement of usurious policyholders, reckless trading of derivatives and Euribor fraud is poorly regulated in the Netherlands. Victims wait too long for justice. It becomes legally possible to reach collective solutions faster. (PvdA, 2021, p. 17)	
159	Our industry and vital infrastructure are not a plaything for foreign private equity parties. The public interest is leading in corporate acquisitions. The Netherlands is no longer at the centre of international tax evasion. We ban large debt levers. Letterbox companies have no business in the Zuidas. We abolish the trust sector. At European level, we ensure fair competition. So that companies do not have to grow into monopolists to be able to take the battle to the world stage. European standards will apply to every company on the European market so that we can be sure that our data does not fall into the wrong hands. (PvdA, 2021, p. 18)	122
160	Medicine development liberated from the clutch of the market. The pharmaceutical industry has been given too much power That comes at the expense of the interests of all of us. Far too expensive drugs ensure that the billions we collectively raise end up with the shareholders of a few big pharma companies. To break this power, the government is going to use compulsory licences to allow pharmacists and other companies to cheaply counterfeit expensive drugs. We will lay this down in tightened European legislation so that the pharma industry starts working for all of us. There will be a national fund for drug research. Transparent pricing will become the norm in the drugs market. (PvdA, 2021, p. 26)	122
161	EU rules for healthier food. Europe is setting stricter rules on the amount of sugar, salt, saturated fats and artificial additives in our food. On top of that, we make conclusive agreements with the food industry for healthier food. (PvdA, 2021, p. 31)	122

162	Abolish landlord levy. The landlord levy is a €2 billion-a-year tax on affordable rental housing. It reduces construction and investment in homes that are desperately needed now. We therefore want to abolish the landlord charge for housing corporations that invest in new construction, sustainability and affordable rents We exempt housing corporations from the profit tax and the ATAD directive. This will allow thousands of affordable homes to be built every year. (PvdA, 2021, p. 42)	112
163	The European Green Deal and the Climate Act will guide the Netherlands' sustainability agenda. We want to fight greenhouse gas emissions, more renewable energy, less plastic pollution and more trees. European regulations force member states to align climate policy. In this way, we also work towards a climate-neutral continent in a European context. We test all legislation for its impact on the climate. (PvdA, 2021, p. 53)	121
164	Reduce emissions by at least 55 per cent. To prevent the world from warming too fast, we choose to reduce CO2 emissions quickly and drastically. We want to do everything to keep the planet clean and liveable. The Netherlands therefore commits to CO2 emissions in line with 1.5 degrees. Our goal is to decide as soon as possible, preferably in a European context, on a reduction of at least 55 per cent by 2030 and to translate this into improved plans for sustainable energy This goal can be raised if technological developments, international steps and/or scientific insights give reason to do so. (PvdA, 2021, p. 53)	121
165	An ambitious European CO2 tax. With this, we ensure that the big polluters in industry will pay. We want to use the revenues to relieve households and to support companies affected by the CO2 tax with investments in jobs and the development of cleaner energy. In this way, we tax bad behaviour and reward good behaviour in companies, and important activity for the Netherlands can be preserved. (Temporary) exemptions are possible for vulnerable industries. (PvdA, 2021, p. 53)	121
166	Border charges for CO2. These are import tariffs on polluting products from countries that are not signatories to the Paris Agreement, or countries that are not taking sufficient action to reduce their emissions. Now companies in member states that tax emissions highly are at a competitive disadvantage compared to companies in countries that do not. This measure promotes both CO2 reduction, and a level playing field. (PvdA, 2021, p. 53)	121
167	Tightening of the EU emissions trading system. Big polluters get limits on the amount of CO2 emissions. We want to increase the reduction factor so that the number of ETS allowances decreases and companies are allowed to emit less. After all, CO2 emissions do not decrease when companies move their emissions outside the EU. By tightening the ETS, we are working towards the goals of the Paris Agreement in a European context. (PvdA, 2021, p. 54)	122
168	Banning single-use plastics. We are implementing the European Single Use Plastics Directive. (PvdA, 2021, p. 56)	
169	Ecodesign directive. There will be new European requirements under the Ecodesign Directive. Products not only become more energy-efficient, but also reusable and repairable This is already taken into account at the design stage of products. (PvdA, 2021, p. 56)	122
170	European forest law. There will be a solid European forest law that obliges companies to stop deforestation, degradation of natural ecosystems and human rights violations in the supply chain. This will bring the Dutch and European footprint in the rest of the world to zero by 2030. The Netherlands invests generously in reforestation on marginal and/or degraded land areas. (PvdA, 2021, p. 57)	122
171	New car is emission-free by 2025. We are tightening the European standard for cars. By 2025, only emission-free new passenger cars, motorbikes, mopeds and scooters will be sold. Making mobility more sustainable is crucial in the energy transition and standardisation is the	122

	best way to achieve this. All means of transport that cause noise pollution we replace as soon as possible for quieter and more sustainable alternatives. (PvdA, 2021, p. 58)	
172	High-quality public transport. In a sustainable Netherlands, public transport is fast, sustainable and affordable. We reduce the travel time between Randstad and the region by investing in fast, sustainable and affordable public transport. With lightning-fast train connections, such as the Lely Line, the Randstad is linked to the north. The east and south will also get fast connections with the Randstad. In addition, we invest in clean and fast public transport within the Randstad, such as the IJmeer connection between Amsterdam and Almere. We also extend regional train connections to our neighbouring countries. In this way, we make the train a good alternative to the car and plane. (PvdA, 2021, p. 58)	111
173	More international train connections as an alternative to flying. There will be more international train connections, such as the Berlin train via Apeldoorn and Arnhem. There will be better cross-border connections between Venlo and Düsseldorf, Heerlen and Aachen, Groningen and Bremen and Hengelo and Münster. Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Utrecht will have fast connections to Brussels, Paris, London Berlin Hamburg and Copenhagen. This makes public transport a real and affordable alternative to flying. (PvdA, 2021, p. 58-59)	111
174	Countering short flights. As soon as fast train connections are in place, cut more flights within Europe. (PvdA, 2021, p. 59)	122
175	Jet fuel tax. Besides industry, agriculture, transport sector and households, aviation and shipping also contribute to CO2 reduction. Together with other countries, the Netherlands is introducing a paraffin tax and pricing environmental damage. Inland navigation vessels get stricter emission standards. (PvdA, 2021, p. 59)	122
176	Importing less cattle feed. Growing cattle feed destroys forests worldwide and saddles our country with an unmanageable manure surplus. Our own field and horticultural residues can serve as excellent substitutes. Dairy farms opt for full grazing and land bonding. Dramatically reduce mortality of young animals in livestock sector. If not done voluntarily, the government will intervene. Piglet tail docking affects piglet welfare and should be stopped. Mandatory camera surveillance in slaughterhouses. For better working conditions and animal welfare, there will be compulsory camera surveillance in slaughterhouses Independent inspectors monitor slaughterhouses. The law for painless slaughter is much better enforced. Stunning pigs with CO2 is animal cruelty. That method is banned as soon as possible. (PvdA, 2021, p. 59)	121
177	Countering overfishing. We combat overfishing globally, as much as possible in a European context. (PvdA, 2021, p. 59)	121
178	Sufficient resources for the rule of law. To fight crime, hardening and insecurity effectively, stability is needed. We opt for stable, multi-year budgets, for investigation and prosecution. This allows professionals to do their jobs properly. (PvdA, 2021, p. 62)	222
179	The police department returns to the Ministry of Interior. From a rule-of-law perspective of separation of powers, it is desirable and necessary to separate the police duties of investigation and maintenance of public order. This way public order and safety receive the attention they deserve. (PvdA, 2021, p. 62)	221
180	More international cooperation. As a trading country, the Netherlands is sensitive to international drug trafficking. That is why we invest extra in international cooperation. We are also starting a national Clean Ports action programme. Because together with the increase in financial interests, the risks for our formal economy are also increasing. (PvdA, 2021, p. 65)	222

181	Strengthening the rule of law. The rule of law provides security. It guards against unjust treatment by citizens, companies or governments. The rule of law protects the minority from the majority and provides certainty that equal cases are treated equally. (PvdA, 2021, p. 66)	222
182	Equal pay for women and men. Women in the Netherlands still earn 15 per cent less per hour than men That amounts to €300,000 in a working lifetime. This wage gap is decreasing slightly every year, but if we continue at the current pace, it will not be closed until 2050. This is unacceptable. We oblige employers to pay women and men the same for the same work. (PvdA, 2021, p. 69)	121
183	At least 30 per cent women in top business. Still too many senior positions are filled by white men. That has to change. Soft measures have not worked, it is time for hard agreements. The SER Opinion 'Diversity at the top, time for acceleration' should be adopted in its entirety, with a 30 per cent quota for women at the top at the largest companies. There will be a law to enforce that goal. A 30 per cent quota is the minimum to take steps in the short term; the ultimate ambition is equal representation. In politics, the Labour Party is leading by example with a diverse list of candidates. (PvdA, 2021, p. 69)	122
184	Recognition of foreign diplomas. Many newcomers are true professionals, or highly educated. Yet the Netherlands does not recognise their diploma. We want to prevent people getting jobs that do not suit them well, or incurring extra costs for training. We want to recognise foreign diplomas faster. (PvdA, 2021, p. 72)	212
185	Integration education better linked to regular education. The quality of and success rate for civic integration can increase by better linking civic integration education to regular education. Preferably, we organise the civic integration education at regular educational institutions. (PvdA, 2021, p. 72)	121
186	Standardisation is not non-committal. Employment agencies without serious anti-discrimination policies will not be awarded public contracts. Housing mediation agencies that do not have a serious anti-discrimination policies lose their licences. (PvdA, 2021, p. 72)	121
187	Fighting discrimination and racism will henceforth fall directly under the Prime Minister. This will henceforth be the Prime Minister's own job. Because it concerns Article 1 of the Constitution. Because it is necessary. Because it affects almost all other fields. Think of housing discrimination, labour market discrimination, discrimination in education and in the judiciary and police. (PvdA, 2021, p. 73)	121
188	There will be a state commission on institutional racism. This commission will investigate and advise on exclusionary mechanisms and institutional racism. It will look at school recommendations, scrutinise social and fraud legislation and look at what can be improve in the police, youth welfare and other agencies. (PvdA, 2021, p. 73)	121
189	Government complies with discrimination prohibitions international treaties. This sounds like an open door, but is necessary when you see government's inadequate compliance with, for example, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Black Lives Matter has again shown that it is important for the government to keenly monitor the prohibition of discrimination. (PvdA, 2021, p. 73)	121
190	Government registration of personal characteristics restricted. Citizens can decide for themselves how they are registered. Characteristics such as ' migration background ' are only kept if it has an advantage for the registered person, such as in healthcare. This also applies in companies and other organisations. Gender registration disappears from the identity card. On the passport, people will be allowed to choose an X.	121

	(PvdA, 2021, p. 73)	
191	Police and the Public Prosecution Service will pay more attention to discrimination, racism, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia. People should not be discriminated against. That means taking reports seriously, harsher punishments for violence with a discriminatory motive and a tougher approach to racism and anti-Semitism around football. Criminal law is also needed here. To combat discrimination, we want more specialised police officers and better enforcement. Victims of discrimination are given better access to the police. (PvdA, 2021, p. 73)	121
192	Remove the disadvantage of dual nationality. A dual nationality is not a sign that you are not loyal to the Netherlands. People who have dual nationality (sometimes forced) run into practical problems. We want to remove these. At the same time, we want to help people who want to get rid of their dual nationality. (PvdA, 2021, p. 73)	212
193	Discrimination because of gender identity, gender expression, gender characteristics and sexual orientation is explicitly banned. This will be included in the Code of Criminal Law. (PvdA, 2021, p. 74)	122
194	Local covenants. The municipality, together with employers, education, police and entertainment venues to eliminate discrimination. (PvdA, 2021, p. 74)	122
195	Treat racism as a hate crime. In doing so, we increase penalties for perpetrators. Police and the prosecutor's office are given more leeway to track down and prosecute perpetrators of racism and discrimination and prosecute them. (PvdA, 2021, p. 74)	221
196	Strong enforcement on labour market discrimination. Whether it is on age, gender, origin, disability or sexual orientation The capacity of inspectorates is going up. We increase willingness to report by making it clear that it makes sense to report. There will be more awareness of prejudice among employers and employment agencies; the government will play a pioneering role and set a good example There will be 'naming and shaming' of the worst offenders. (PvdA, 2021, p. 74)	211
197	Institutions such as the police, the UWV, education and healthcare institutions reflect the diversity of our society. Our common institutions are transparent about diversity. (PvdA, 2021, p. 74)	221
198	Labelling against discrimination. It is unacceptable for entertainment venues and clubs to refuse people based on their appearance. There are low-threshold online reporting points that the mayor and police can use to deal with offenders. Anyone who discriminates can lose their operating licence. Following The Hague's example, a quality mark against discrimination was introduced. With this, businesses and the catering industry would make their good behaviour known to the public. (PvdA, 2021, p. 74)	221
199	No ethnic profiling. Ethnic profiling undermines trust in the rule of law and is therefore countered at all times. Awareness-raising and training help in this regard. (PvdA, 2021, p. 75)	221
200	Fighting discrimination and racism is priority. We judge people by their actions and not by their origin. (PvdA, 2021, p. 75)	221
201	Right-wing extremism and jihadist terrorism. Right-wing extremists are finding each other more and more easily internationally. This raises concerns. The threat of jihadist terrorism also remains a real danger. Intelligence agencies in Europe are working better together to make a firmer fist against international insecurity. (PvdA, 2021, p. 75)	221
202	Standing firm for democracy and the rule of law. The PvdA stands firm for, alongside and behind all administrators, politicians, journalists, opinion makers, cartoonists, artists and all	221

	others who fight for our freedoms and democratic achievements. We do not bow to oppression and undermining, of anyone or anywhere. (PvdA, 2021, p. 76)	
203	Mutual, constructive cooperation with the Caribbean Netherlands and autonomous countries within the Kingdom. We work together, recognising our connectedness while appreciating differences. Participation for residents is important. We strengthen the democratic input of the islands of Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba by giving their representatives the right to speak in the House of Representatives on laws that affect them. The obligation to register for elections will lapse for residents of Curaçao Aruba and Sint Maarten. A well-functioning rule of law on the islands. This is a prerequisite for good cooperation and improving the situation on the islands. Impacts of climate change. Climate change will have major consequences for the Caribbean Netherlands and the autonomous countries. We are investing in climate adaptation and sustainable energy on the islands. Autonomous countries are given a greater role in Dutch diplomacy and our trade policy. (PvdA, 2021, p. 78)	222
204	People must be sure of decent work, loving care, good education and a nice home. For this, it is important that the right to decent working conditions and access to care, education and housing are well established. Precisely these social and economic rights are included in our Constitution as 'duties of care', not as rights to which citizens can directly appeal. They are, however, firmly anchored in international treaties, which thus play an important role in this. For instance, our right to education is not in the Constitution, but it is in the European Convention on Human Rights. We stand firmly for the international legal order (Art. 90-94 Constitution) and the protection that human rights conventions thereby also provide in the Netherlands (and the Kingdom). This is an important element of the Dutch and social democratic tradition and of essence in Europe and beyond. (PvdA, 2021, p. 78-79)	221
205	Greater parliamentary involvement in international treaty-making by sending along delegations to negotiations. (PvdA, 2021, p. 79)	
206	Breaking up Big Tech. In Europe, we will work together to break up too big Big Tech. Facebook's acquisition of WhatsApp is being reversed and future acquisitions, such as of Google and Fitbit, are being looked at much more critically. Devices, software and app stores do not belong in the hands of one company. Restoring privacy. A handful of big US companies are in charge of our internet, the software and hardware we use, and thus our society, online and offline. We are making our society less dependent on Big Tech. Data collection purely for advertising will be stopped and the relationship between services and customers will be restored by banning all digital personalised ads, cracking down on sales of personal data and actively promoting the right to oblivion. If you want to switch to a competing platform, you will be allowed to take your data and network with you, so you are no longer dependent on one website or app. In doing so, we tackle Big Tech's revenue model and regain our privacy. (PvdA, 2021, p. 81)	122
207	Language is culture. We invest in strengthening the regional languages Nether-Saxon, Frisian and Limburgish. They are an important part of the identity of many Dutch people. The agreements laid down by the Nether-Saxon Covenant, the Limburgish Covenant and the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages will be expanded. (PvdA, 2021, p. 85)	222
208	Europe is our most important voice in the world and the best instrument to defend Dutch interests. A look at the rest of the world and certainly at the so-called superpowers makes the Union's important position sharply visible: as a forerunner in tackling climate change, as a democratic community of values despite the problems with Poland and Hungary and as the main pillar of the multilateral system. By first and foremost operating visibly within the European Union but also through coalitions with like-minded countries both within and outside it, the Netherlands can be most effective. The PvdA therefore wants a strong Europe, with an active Dutch commitment. And there is more for which we need Europe: for effective	221

	cooperation with our neighbours and with countries in our neighbouring continent Africa, as a counterweight to the Putins of this world, for tackling tax evasion and unfair competition, and for fair trade. However, this will not happen automatically and first and foremost requires a conscious choice for Europe as a crucial instrument of a social democratic foreign policy. (PvdA, 2021, p. 88)	
209	Social rights are equal to economic freedoms. We make arrangements within the EU so that social rights are no longer subordinate to economic freedoms. To restore the balance, we include a social progress clause in the European treaties, which protects social rights from the negative effects of economic freedoms. (PvdA, 2021, p. 88)	121
210	Only Europe can protect us from the power of big companies that will otherwise not fail to play countries off against each other. Capital will be taxed more heavily (including with minimum corporate tax rates). Working, on the other hand, will be spared more. Europe will make it impossible for big (tech) companies to avoid paying taxes. The completion of the banking union, with higher capital buffers and a European bonus capon d puts the risks where they belong: with bankers and their shareholders. (PvdA, 2021, p. 88)	122
211	Good trade deals with the UK. This is also in the Dutch interest. A level playing field is essential. So that means no concessions on working conditions, taxes and sustainability. (PvdA, 2021, p. 88)	121
212	Standing up for democracy and supporting human rights in the EU's southern and eastern neighbours, such as Belarus. But also for their independence; our eastern European neighbours and the countries of the South Caucasus can freely decide on their own future and orientation and should not become or remain victims of a perceived struggle for spheres of influence. (PvdA, 2021, p. 88)	221
213	Western Balkans hold out prospect of EU accession. EU enlargement in the Western Balkans is proceeding with difficulty. This is partly due to a lack of reforms in areas crucial to the EU such as respect for human rights and a functioning rule of law. The EU's new negotiating approach rightly puts most emphasis on these. But disappointing results in Serbia are offset by encouraging developments in northern Macedonia. This is another reason why the EU is not leaving the region to China, Russia and Turkey. Countries in the Western Balkans retain the prospect of EU accession. That requires greater political commitment and adequate financial support. (PvdA, 2021, p. 88)	221
214	Abolish unanimity rule foreign policy. In almost all areas of foreign policy, EU member states have more or less exclusive competence with the exception of trade policy and international treaties. Decisions are made by unanimity. This affects Europe's clout. In crises, the EU's foreign representative is mostly busy calling around the 27 member states, often resulting in the lowest common denominator. That is why we abolish the unanimity rule in the foreign pillar. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	222
215	Migration is something of all times. It has made our country a society of people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The contemporary political debate on migration is often a debate between two extremes: everybody welcome or nobody welcome. We are always open to receiving refugees and take a sober look at what is needed for our own labour market. Take migration out of the taboo and implement humane, sober and effective policies. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	121
216	Many migration policies are left to the market, both for high and low-skilled labour migration. Economic necessity is often cited as the overriding argument. The conditions of many migrants or their impact on the society are taken at face value. It is said to be something temporary which is often not true. And indifference reigns supreme. We cannot accept that European migrant workers are structurally vulnerable in their work and housing. That is	111

	unacceptable. We cherish the freedom to work where you want within the EU and this is properly and decently regulated. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	
217	In the Netherlands, we continue to generously offer protection to refugees who had to leave their country for humanitarian or political reasons. There is solid support for this in our country. That solidarity should not be put to the test by migrants who came our way for purely economic reasons. If we want to distribute refugees more fairly in Europe and resettle the most vulnerable and marginalised, asylum procedures must be more effective and faster. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	221
218	Labour migration as a business model we tackle. We do not leave labour migration to the market. The European free movement of workers is the right of individuals and not meant as a cost saving for employers. Labour migration should not come at the expense of decent wages and working conditions. Employers should never abuse differences in premiums and fiscal arrangements as a business model at the expense of protecting workers. With a European ban on premium hopping and adjustment of tax rules (such as the ET scheme), we counteract social dumping. The employer is obliged to prove that he/she pays the same wage costs, pension contributions and social premiums and therefore does not gain any cost advantage. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	212
219	Temporary employment agencies are no longer allowed to post across borders. This will combat exploitation of foreign workers. A colleague from the EU is welcome in the Netherlands through the free movement of workers. Migrant workers can be of decent working conditions. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	111
220	Decent working conditions for migrant workers. Migrant workers have too often become the plaything of companies that want to produce as cheaply as possible. Industries like slaughterhouses and distribution centres where it is regularly found that the rights of migrant workers are not taken seriously are being addressed. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	121
221	An effective European labour inspectorate. We want to increase the chance of catching evasion of social legislation by freeing up sufficient resources for the European labour inspectorate. Member states are forced to cooperate, otherwise sanctions will follow. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	212
222	In case of any labour market shortages, retraining, activation of residents of the Netherlands will be looked at in the first instance. In the case of labour migrants coming from outside the EU through the expatriates and knowledge workers scheme, UWV testing will remain in place and the employer will have to demonstrate added value. There will be an end to tax or other subsidies to bring workers to the Netherlands. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	211
223	EU-wide minimum wage. The aim is to achieve a decent social minimum and a decent minimum social wage in all EU member states. With social lower limits we counteract social dumping. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	122
224	Legal opportunities for migration. To prevent unregulated migration from Africa, we aim to better regulate legal opportunities for migration. This will contribute to our efforts to close life-threatening routes, which are now often used. We are thinking of: temporary workplaces, internships and study opportunities. Good research into local conditions forms the basis for this, so that the migrant's knowledge and experience gained in the Netherlands can be used in the country of origin. In this way, this temporary migration also contributes to long-term future prospects in countries of origin. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	212
225	The UN refugee convention stands upright. People retain the right to seek asylum on European soil, each has the right to an individual assessment and no one is sent back to an unsafe country. There is strong support in Dutch society for welcoming people fleeing war, violence and persecution. We will always try to offer them safety. At the same time, this requires a grip	212

	on migration. Unregulated migration benefits human traffickers. With realistic and humane migration policies, we guarantee social cohesion without compromising solidarity. In order to maintain support, there will be faster asylum procedures and people who are not entitled to stay will actually be sent back to their country of origin That is an important part of a well-functioning and humane migration policy. Cooperation with countries of origin is necessary, but is always accompanied by respect for international human rights treaties. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89 & 92)	
226	Larger Netherlands contribution to reception of most vulnerable refugees through UNHCR. UNHCR can select the most vulnerable refugees, such as single women, children and LGBT refugees. We want to annually resettle a larger group of vulnerable and marginalised refugees through UNHCR than has been the case in recent years. After all, it is better to bring the most vulnerable refugees to the Netherlands in a controlled and safe manner, than to let people risk their lives to reach Europe and apply for asylum in an irregular manner. We want to make UN and European agreements on a fair and humane distribution of the most vulnerable refugees. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	212
227	There will be a European asylum system based on solidarity and protection. European policy must not be dictated by the few countries that obstruct. As long as there is a European impasse on migration, we want to act with a broad coalition of countries to offer protection to refugees by redistributing them, with financial support from the joint EU budget. Countries in the EU that structurally refuse to take in refugees will face substantial financial cuts to the EU budget and their citizens will lose the right to travel freely within Schengen. This is also our commitment in the negotiations on the new European migration pact. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	212
228	We prevent degrading reception camps and at the EU's external borders. That means we are ready to offer at least 500 refugees detained in Greece a safe home in our country immediately. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89)	212
229	Improving children's rights. There will be special attention in asylum procedures for vulnerable and marginalised people. Children's rights are improved in immigration law. We oppose detention of children in all cases. In the Netherlands, long-staying children are too often denied residence status. In immigration law, the specific interests of the child are more paramount. We recognise child-specific grounds for persecution, such as recruitment and forced marriage, and give them a place in the asylum procedure. Unaccompanied minor refugees are given extra protection and, following the example of other European countries, the Netherlands provides a place for the reception of refugee children stuck in Greece. Unaccompanied children who are long-term residents and rooted here are not sent back. (PvdA, 2021, p. 89-90)	212
230	Effective return policies. Effective return policy of people who are not entitled to stay in the Netherlands requires cooperation and agreements with countries of origin. In exchange for readmission of own nationals, more future perspectives could be explored in the home country and a limited number of temporary workplaces, internships and study opportunities for legal migrants. It is most effective to make such agreements in a European context. In this way, we maintain support for the reception of genuine refugees, we offer prospects for countries of origin and we can work on an effective return policy. (PvdA, 2021, p. 92)	212
231	Standing up for democracy, rule of law and human rights is the main pillar of our foreign policy. We actively and fundamentally stand up for them as they are increasingly under pressure Within the EU itself where in some member states governments are seriously undermining the rule of law In neighbouring EU countries and globally there seems to be a democratic recession. The EU is seriously failing by not prioritising this area. It is not cracking down on its own member states and sparing ruling elites in neighbouring countries for the sake of stability. (PvdA, 2021, p. 93)	212
232	An EU member state defends the European values of freedom and equality in word and deed. For those who do not, the EU now has insufficient tools to tackle them. The existing Article 7,	222

	<p>whereby a member state can only be condemned if all the others agree, has become blunt. That is why we are developing an EU rule of law mechanism that reviews all countries every year and imposes sanctions in case of identified violations. In addition, we link respect for the rule of law and fundamental freedoms to the allocation of European grants. (PvdA, 2021, p. 93)</p>	
233	<p>Strengthen, democratise and modernise the multilateral system. The PvdA does not accept the erosion of international organisations such as the UN, the OSCE, and the Council of Europe. Where undemocratic countries frustrate the work of these organisations, the Netherlands, together with like-minded countries, puts up a dam against it. Much misery is prevented by monitoring and ‘early warning’ this remains a spearhead of human rights policy. Civil society has an important role to play in word and deed. NGOs, activists and human rights defenders are often the only ones who can build a dam internally against encroachment on the rule of law. Globally, these organisations are under pressure. We better equip Dutch embassies and CSOs to support these organisations. (PvdA, 2021, p. 93)</p>	221
234	<p>All EU treaties with third countries contain a human rights paragraph. In which there will be more emphasis on recognising and strengthening the rights of vulnerable and marginalised groups and individuals. Such agreements include more than an annual, non-compulsory dialogue but also offer the possibility of sanctions. (PvdA, 2021, p. 93)</p>	222
235	<p>Ban funding of political parties and/or political campaigns from abroad. Our democracy is precious. Foreign (digital) influence on democratic processes poses a serious threat. In a European context, tech giants are required to be transparent about ads and algorithms. (PvdA, 2021, p. 93)</p>	222
236	<p>The Labour Party stands firm in defending press freedom, independent rule of law and fundamental freedoms also in Turkey. We support civil society in Turkey Women's rights are under pressure. We therefore call on Turkey to fully implement the Istanbul Convention, which combats violence against women. EU accession negotiations with President Erdogan's Turkey are halted. We remain steadfastly committed to the release of political prisoners, such as Osman Kavala and Selahattin Demirtas. A peaceful solution for oppressed minority groups, such as the Kurdish issue, moves higher up the EU agenda. More attention will also be paid to the position of minorities. The PvdA maintains close contact with Turkish sister parties, the CHP and the HDP, with trade unions and civil society organisations. (PvdA, 2021, p. 93)</p>	222
237	<p>The United Nations is the key institution for addressing urgent global and regional security issues. Unfortunately, the five permanent members of the Security Council's veto power often obstruct the organisation. This regularly leads to the UN being completely ignored. Rules dating from 1945 deserve modernisation The Security Council is becoming more democratic and representative The Netherlands is pushing for an EU seat. (PvdA, 2021, p. 95)</p>	222
238	<p>NATO stands for the collective defence of its members most of whom are also EU members. However, the US wants a larger contribution from European countries, the norm agreed in the NATO context of 2 per cent of Gross Domestic Product Until the EU is able to take over that role and responsibility, the obvious solution is to strengthen the European leg within NATO. NATO's so-called ‘out of area’ role is less suited to the changed relations between the US and Europe. The EU is adapting existing security and defence policy arrangements to take over that role from NATO. This would also significantly contribute to the strategic autonomy of the EU, which would thereby be able to further fulfil its ambitions in foreign policy and European security. (PvdA, 2021, p. 95)</p>	222
239	<p>Increasing the defence budget. This is in line with the constitutional mandate to protect the international rule of law and the need to properly carry out tasks within NATO and the EU. We invest in the Armed Forces, the men and women who keep us safe, and in being able to carry out missions That includes well-trained and diverse personnel, with decent pay and enough colleagues.</p>	222

	(PvdA, 2021, p. 95)	
240	All weapons of mass destruction out of the world. There are still nuclear weapons in the world and even new rounds of armament threatening also in Europe. The Netherlands joins the recently enacted new UN treaty banning nuclear weapons. We extend the START and INF treaties on strategic and medium-range weapons. We prevent the placement of new nuclear weapons in Europe. The Netherlands does not store nuclear weapons. The F 35 has no nuclear capability. (PvdA, 2021, p. 95-96)	222
241	Ban on autonomous lethal weapons systems. The Netherlands is making the case in the European and UN context for legal instruments banning the development, production and deployment of lethal autonomous weapon systems. (PvdA, 2021, p. 96)	
242	A two-state solution between Israel and Palestine, respecting the pre-1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the shared capital. The EU is using all possible means to revive a peace process. If the Israeli government proceeds to annex territories in the West Bank, sanctions will follow. (PvdA, 2021, p. 96)	222
243	Russia. The Netherlands does not hesitate to challenge the Russian government when human rights are at stake, as in the case of the poisoning of opposition leader Navalny, the crackdown in Georgia/Ukraine and the war crimes committed in Syria. The Netherlands insists on the territorial integrity (including Crimea) of Ukraine. As long as Russia does not accept that, sanctions will remain in place. The Netherlands continues to insist on Moscow's full cooperation in the MH17 trial. We will stop cooperating with Nordstream 2 and actively work on an EU strategy to accelerate the reduction of energy dependence on Russia. We arm ourselves more effectively against dis and misinformation spread by the Russians and Under all these circumstances, an open dialogue is not obvious, but cooperation can be sought in the areas of disarmament and climate. (PvdA, 2021, p. 96)	222
244	China. China has become a significant geopolitical power in economic, political and military terms. China is a partner when it comes to multilateral agreements on trade and climate. But cooperation with China is not unconditional Vigilance is needed when it comes to access to the Chinese market, protection of intellectual property, dumping and labour market exploitation. Regionally, China pursues military dominance. At the global level, it mainly deploys economic instruments to increase its influence. In Europe, several countries have joined the Belt and Road Initiative, the New Silk Road and there is a partnership between Eastern Europe countries and China (17+1). They sometimes stand in the way of a critical stance by Europe when it comes to human rights (Hong Kong, Uighurs). The Netherlands does not go along with this but clearly stand against Chinese malpractices. (PvdA, 2021, p. 96-97)	222
245	United States. Since President Trump took office, relations between the US and Europe have cooled considerably. The US elections are of great importance. Under Biden, will the US become a partner again when it comes to security, climate and fair trade, or will it further turn away from international cooperation and multilateral institutions under Trump? Whatever the outcome, it is clear that Europe will be more self-reliant in the coming years than in the times before Trump. The EU will have to become more autonomous. (PvdA, 2021, p. 97)	222
246	Fair taxation is crucial. International companies compulsorily disclose where they operate and how much tax they pay per country. In the European context, the Netherlands is making a strong case against competition on tax rates by arguing for a minimum international rate. (PvdA, 2021, p. 98)	122
247	Sustainability is at the heart of current and future trade agreements. With a European model, which includes respect for workers' rights, the environment and animal welfare, and a duty of care for companies to make their supply chains sustainable. (PvdA, 2021, p. 98)	122

248	The Labour Party wants new agreements in Europe on responsible public finances, giving governments room to invest in a fair and decent economy with enough jobs. (PvdA, 2021, p. 99)	122
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Table 6) Evidence overview (cross-checked data)

PvdA preferences	Eurocepticism			
	Reformist: Absent / soft Eurocepticism Revolutionary: hard Eurocepticism			
Topic	2012 data units	Brexit	2017 data units	2021 data units
Labour market and discrimination in the labour market (migrant workers), position of workers, social markets, (housing, healthcare, pharmaceutical industry)	6; 8; 15; 16; 45; 46; 47; 48; 49		91; 104; 123; 125; 126; 129; 130; 131	149; 150; 151; 152; 153; 159; 160; 161; 162; 196; 209; 216; 218; 219; 220; 221; 223
Asylum, (im)migration, integration, and (non)discrimination, language inclusion, children's rights	11; 13; 14; 17; 19; 23; 70; 75; 80		85; 86; 87; 88; 89; 90; 92; 93; 96; 97; 98; 99; 100; 101; 103; 105	184; 185; 186; 187; 188; 191; 192; 194; 195; 197; 198; 199; 200; 207; 215; 217; 223; 224; 225; 226; 227; 228; 229; 230
Financial markets and the banking sector (Banking Union)	5; 7; 51; 52; 53; 54; 55; 56; 83		111; 112; 113	157
Economy, agriculture, climate, nature, and animal welfare	4; 24; 25; 26; 27; 31; 32; 33; 34; 76; 78		110; 116; 117; 118; 119; 120; 121; 122; 128; 135; 136; 137;	163; 164; 165; 166; 167; 169; 170; 171; 175; 176
Sexual violence, gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights	9; 10; 66; 67; 69		94; 95; 102; 148	182; 183; 190; 193
EU, Rule of Law, public finances (taxation), international cooperation, military operations and fight against terrorism	18; 35; 36; 37; 38; 39; 40; 41; 42; 43; 44; 57; 58; 59; 60; 61; 62; 63; 64; 65; 68; 71; 72; 73; 74; 77; 79		84; 106; 107; 108; 109; 114; 115; 127; 138; 139; 140; 141; 142; 143; 144; 145; 146; 147	154; 155; 156; 178; 179; 180; 181; 189; 201; 202; 204; 208; 210; 211; 212; 213; 214; 231; 232; 233; 234; 235; 236; 237; 238; 239; 240; 242; 243; 244; 245; 246; 247; 248
Cooperation in the Kingdom of The Netherlands	81			203;
Single-market principles, transportation, and railways and aviation	20; 28; 29; 30		124; 132; 133; 134	172; 173; 174
Privacy	21;			206;
Total data units	76		65	99
Omitted data units	1; 2; 3; 12; 22; 50; 82			158; 168; 205; 241

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