Universiteit Leiden
The Netherlands

European Radical Left Parties' Divergence on Russia: Comradery or Heated Rivalry?

Novohradský, Vilém

Citation
Novohradský, V. (2026). *European Radical Left Parties' Divergence on Russia: Comradery or Heated Rivalry?*.

Version:	Not Applicable (or Unknown)
License:	License to inclusion and publication of a Bachelor or Master Thesis, 2023
Downloaded from:	https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4293931

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

European Radical Left Parties' Divergence on Russia: Comradery or Heated Rivalry?

Vilém Novohradský (s3941280)

Euroscepticism: Causes, Consequences and Responses

BSc Political Science: International Relations and Organizations

Bachelor's thesis

Thesis supervisor: Dr. Nikoleta Yordanova

Due date: 31 January 2026

Word count: 7025

Embargo statement: This thesis can be published open to the public in Leiden University's digital Student Repository.

Contents

Introduction 3

Literature review 5

Radical left and the European Union 5

Radical left parties and Russia 6

Shared principles, different interpretations 7

Theoretical framework and expectations 9

Party typology 9

Policy reactions to Russian aggression 9

Theoretical expectations 10

Methodology 13

Research design 13

Case selection 13

Party classification 14

Sampling strategy and data description 15

Coding frame 16

Analysis and results 17

Aggressor 17

Sanctions 19

Military aid 19

Non-military aid 20

Conclusion 21

Bibliography 23

Introduction

The return of military aggression between two sovereign European states seemed impossible until only a few years ago. This illusion was shattered on February 24th, 2022, when Russia unleashed its full-scale war against Ukraine. Such a clear act of aggression briefly united political parties across Europe, casting the exceptions into the spotlight. The European Parliament was quick to react and within days passed a resolution condemning Russian aggression. Only thirteen parliamentarians voted against, predominantly of radical left persuasion (HowTheyVote.eu, 2022). Radical left parties (RLPs) are defined as those that "reject the underlying socio-economic structure of contemporary capitalism and its values and practices" (March & Mudde 2005, p. 25; March, 2011, p. 49; Escalona et al., 2023, p. 49; Wagner, 2025). For RLPs, socio-economic inequality is the foundation of present social and political arrangements and they advocate radical redistribution of wealth. On the political spectrum, they are found to the left of social democracy. Most RLPs advocate for democratic socialism, but some support non-democratic methods for gaining power or achieving their policy objectives (Escalona et al., 2023, p. 15). RLPs embrace internationalism as a response and solution to global structural problems of capitalism and globalization (March & Mudde, 2005). Despite receiving somewhat limited attention from scholars, radical left parties are far from irrelevant. In recent years, many have participated in government in several EU member states (e.g. Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, and Finland; Gomez et al., 2025). A closer study of RLPs is therefore particularly relevant in the face of Europe's major geopolitical realignment since the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

After the initial moment of overwhelming support for Ukraine across the political spectrum and unanimous recognition of Russia as the aggressor, this rally-around-the-flag effect appears to be waning. Several radical left parties are taking up 'anti-war' discourse, demanding an end to the war no matter the cost for Ukraine's sovereignty – ignoring the continuous Russian attacks on Ukraine's civilian population (Wurthmann & Wagner, 2025; Council of Europe, 2026). However, available studies only analyzed RLPs in the first year after the full-scale invasion, leaving a research gap in the period after the initial reaction of shock. Focusing on the period since February 24th, 2023, this research asks: What explains the heterogeneity of European radical left parties' stances on Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine?

Based on previous literature, this research analyzes party stances on four key areas of foreign policy related to the war in Ukraine and presents the following four theoretical expectations: 1) Socio-culturally conservative RLPs do not see Russia as the aggressor in the conflict but progressive RLPs do; 2) Progressive parties want to maintain or increase sanctions on Russia while conservative parties want to abolish the sanctions regime; 3) Conservative RLPs oppose sending military aid to Ukraine but progressive parties support arms deliveries; 4) All RLPs support sending non-military aid to Ukraine (e.g. humanitarian aid).

To answer the question above and examine the theoretical expectations, this research will employ a qualitative content analysis of party programs for the 2024 European Parliament elections and of plenary speeches given by the parties' representatives in the European Parliament. A coding frame was developed deductively from theory.

Results of this research are partially in line with theoretical expectations. Conservative radical left parties indeed equivocated on Russia's role in the invasion or rejected it entirely. Conversely, progressive RLPs integrated opposition against Putin's Russia into their anti-imperialist stance. On sanctions, parties were split according to expectations. Conservative parties opposed the continued sanctions on Russia while progressive RLPs were in favor of keeping them in place. Against expectations, a party's position on socio-cultural issues did not have an effect on its support for military aid, as almost all radical left parties were found to share strong anti-militarist principles and opposed provision of military assistance to Ukraine. Finally, parties were in fact split on the provision of non-military aid, contrary to the expectations. These findings fill gaps in research on medium-term developments related to the war in Ukraine and contribute to existing literature on the conflict, as well as on the radical left. Moreover, the results help explain the diversity of reactions to the continued Russian aggression in Ukraine.

The following sections will review the state of the art of academic literature on radical left parties and their foreign policy stances, paying particular attention to their relationship with Russia in the run-up to the full-scale invasion and the initial reaction. Afterwards, key concepts will be elaborated on and this paper's theoretical expectations will be set out. A section on research design will follow, explaining and justifying the methods used. Then, results and findings of the analysis will be laid out before finally concluding.

Literature review

This section will lay out the state of literature on radical left parties' foreign policy and their relationships with the EU and Russia.

Radical left and the European Union

As with many other issues, the radical left is split on European integration. Marxist-Leninist thought traditionally called for a global socialist regime and rejected regional integration in Europe (Lenin, 1915). Few electorally successful parties still follow this school of thought, an example would be the *Communist Party of Greece* (KKE; Escalona et al., 2023, p. 269). Later critiques centered on the community's preference for negative integration (e.g. liberalizing the single market) instead of positive integration (e.g. establishing common social policies) and decried the EU for being a "neoliberal project" (Andry, 2022; Escalona et al., 2023, p. 54). These critiques became ever more poignant during the Eurozone crisis and enforced austerity measures even gave rise to several RLPs in the affected states, such as Greece's *Syriza*, Spain's *Podemos* or Ireland's aptly-named *Anti-Austerity Alliance* (Verbeek & Zaslove, 2016; Keith, 2018; Dunphy & March, 2020). Today, most RLPs can be classified as "soft" Eurosceptics who like the ideal of a united Europe, but advocate changes in policy towards more common welfare, democratization and socialism (Die Linke, Enhedslisten, La France Insoumise; Szczerbiak & Taggart 2008; Escalona et al., 2023). However, some radical left parties call for a national exit from the EU (e.g. the *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia*; Escalona et al. 2023, p. 620).

A theoretical link between Euroscepticism and RLP affinity towards Russia is contested in academia. Hooghe et al. (2024) found that populism and Euroscepticism explain most of the variation in support for Ukraine among RLPs, but this is disputed by Wondreys et al. (2024) who find "no evidence of Euroscepticism being a prime motivator for friendliness towards Russia" and that populism mattered only for two parties in the 9th European Parliament – Ireland's *Independents 4 Change* (I4C) and Germany's *Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance* (BSW; Wondreys et al., 2024, p. 709). According to Fagerholm (2025), Euroscepticism does not play a role and populism does in fact increase sympathy towards Russia. Given the lack of academic consensus, the following section will dive deeper into the history of RLP relations with Russia.

Radical left parties and Russia

The radical left has never been fully united in its foreign policy towards Russia or the former Soviet Union. Of course, communist parties in the Eastern Bloc were forced to keep their oath to the Soviets, but Western European RLPs held various positions. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the salience of Russia dropped significantly in foreign policy discussions across the entire political spectrum. All parties tended to view Russia somewhat positively, even those from the former Eastern Bloc (Onderco, 2019). After the 2014 annexation of Crimea and Donbas invasion, the political mainstream became more wary of Russia and the EU implemented a first set of limited sanctions (European Council, n.d.). Most RLPs, however, adopted the Russian narrative and blamed NATO expansionism, US imperialism, and the EU's hunger for market expansion for the "Donbas crisis" (Braghiroli & Makarychev, 2016; Györi & Krekó, 2016). During this stage of the conflict, no other political group in the European Parliament had a better relationship with Russia, not even the far right or the non-inscrits (Holesch et al., 2024).

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 marked a break in European foreign policy towards Russia across the political spectrum. Many parties who claimed plausible deniability when inquired about Russian actions in 2014 could not reasonably assume the same position towards a full-scale invasion. Average RLP assertiveness towards Russia matched that of mainstream parties (Holesch et al., 2024). However, not all parties were (fully) on board, as seen in the voting records on the first EP resolution condemning the aggression. Among the 13 nay-voters were Ireland's *Independents 4 Change* (I4C), the *Portuguese Communist Party* (PCP), the *Communist Party of Greece* (KKE), and some members of Germany's *Die Linke* (The Left). Remaining members of *Die Linke* abstained, as did Czechia's *Stačilo!* (Enough!). But many RLPs voted to condemn the Russian invasion, for example *La France Insoumise* (France Unbowed, LFI), Finland's *Vasemmistoliitto* (Left Alliance, Vas), Denmark's *Enhedslisten* (Red-Green Unity List), and Spain's *Podemos* (We can!). This amounts to an even split on the conflict amongst the forty-six radical left parliamentarians at the outbreak of the conflict (HowTheyVote.eu, 2022).

Reactions to the 2014 and 2022 invasions are emblematic of RLP susceptibility to Kremlin narratives and propaganda. Russia's self-proclaimed mission to fight

contemporary fascism (used to justify the last two invasions of Ukraine) and the goal of reducing US influence in Europe appeal to parties who criticize transatlantic security arrangements (Braghiroli & Makarychev, 2016). RLPs tend to see Russia as the lesser of two evils and often abide by the 'enemy of my enemy is my friend' principle (Golosov, 2020; Györi & Krekó, 2016). This can lead to selective anti-imperialism; for example, criticizing military interventions by NATO and the United States in Iraq, but not Russian campaigns in Georgia and Ukraine (Györi & Krekó, 2016; Hendl & Durdiyeva, 2024). The Kremlin has also attempted to hijack the decolonial and anti-globalization agendas of radical left parties with some success, as seen with the Wagner group in Africa (Pokalova, 2023; Wondreys et al., 2024).

Shared principles, different interpretations

Radical left parties do generally share principles of internationalism, anti-militarism, anti-imperialism, and support for international law, but shared principles do not translate into a shared foreign policy stance as their interpretations vary greatly according to a party's dogmatic or strategic position (Wondreys et al., 2024; Wagner, 2025). This is clearly visible with regards to Russia. The 2014, and especially the 2022 invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces has split the European radical left into two main groups: First, parties who equally oppose the US-led liberal capitalist order and Russia's imperialism, and second, parties who view Russia as a counter-hegemon and believe "the enemy of their enemy" is their friend (Braghiroli and Makarychev, 2016; Keith and March 2023). Crucially, this divide largely follows the cleavage between socio-culturally progressive and conservative radical left parties (Holesch et al. 2024; Wagner 2025). Progressive RLPs have an issue with the growing nationalism and militarism of Putin's Russia, which became even more extreme after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine (Robinson, 2019; Kuzio, 2022). These parties have integrated opposition to contemporary Russia into their anti-imperialist frameworks. Conversely, the RLPs who share Kremlin's conservative or nationalist values are more likely to look the other way or use Russian narratives in their assessment of the war (Holesch et al. 2024; Wagner, 2025). Even though mainstream Russian politics are far from leftist or pacifist, these RLPs see Europe's eastern neighbor as a benign counter-hegemon to the Western liberal order (Rohac et al., 2017; Akturk, 2019; Wondreys et al., 2024).

Certain shared positions are also the coincidental results of pragmatism on both sides. Both the Kremlin and some RLPs (e.g. BSW, Stačilo!, KKE) reject European integration because it is detrimental to their political strategy, not necessarily because of prior ideological alignment (Braghiroli & Makarychev, 2016). For parties, sympathizing with Russia can strengthen their anti-system appeal. For Russia, attracting European parties undermines Western support for Ukraine and the EU (Williams & Ishiyama, 2018; Golosov, 2020). Russia's materialist approach to foreign policy, free of normative judgments, is shared by some parties, especially populists (Chryssogelos, 2010). No matter the cause, these decisions effectively align said parties with the Kremlin's foreign policy objectives.

In summary, the radical left party family has never been fully united in its stance on Russia but this divide became stronger after 2022 and materialized along an existing socio-cultural cleavage. After the full-scale invasion, progressive RLPs became more hostile towards Russia, while conservative parties retained their russophilia and refused to condemn the invasion (Holesch et al., 2024). However, all studies conducted on the topic have focused on the first year since the full-scale invasion and developments since 2023 remain a mystery. Several studies also treated the party family and/or *The Left in the European Parliament* as a homogenous group, limiting our past knowledge on the subject (Holesh et al., 2024; Hooghe et al., 2024; Fagerholm, 2025; Wagner 2025; Wondreys et al., 2025). Restructuralizations, such as Sahra Wagenknecht's split-off from Germany's Die Linke and the merger of Czechia's *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia* (KSČM) into Stačilo! could have reasonably led to a shift in party policy towards the conflict because among RLPs, splits and mergers are often related to policy shifts (Gomez et al., 2016). Moreover, war fatigue among European electorates could have weakened support for Ukraine, soliciting a response from political parties (Unan and Klüver, 2024; Wondreys et al., 2024). For example, RLPs may no longer support the EU sanction regime on Russia to the same extent as at the beginning of the full-scale invasion on the basis of high energy prices or alleged "ineffectiveness" at ending the war. Parties who initially took staunch anti-Russian positions may have watered down their stances over time. Conversely, the strong ideological foundations of the radical left party family result in a permanent anti-imperialist stance against Russia. This research aims to explore and explain current trends in RLP support (or lack thereof) for several EU policies intended to help Ukraine and punish Russia. The question is: What explains the

heterogeneity of European radical left parties' stances on Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine?

Theoretical framework and expectations

Having established the research gap in existing literature and having posited the research question, this section will now lay out concepts that are crucial for understanding this research. Subsequently, theoretical expectations will be presented.

Party typology

After the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia and student revolts, many radical left parties have undergone ideological and strategic transformations. In Western Europe, RLPs largely abandoned the Soviet style of authoritarian communism in favor of democratic socialism and, throughout the 1970s, so-called New Left issues gained prominence – e.g. environmentalism, gender issues, democracy, social justice, and opposition to traditional morality (Inglehart, 1977; Gomez et al., 2016; Escalona, Keith & March, 2023; Piccolino & Puleo, 2024). In the 1980s and 1990s, RLPs suffered a decrease in popularity and diverged in two directions. Some parties restricted themselves to their traditional principles of class struggle while other parties modernized and rebranded themselves towards New Left issues, which became just as or even more important for them than economic issues (Botella et al., 2003; Gomez et al., 2016). Since approximately the 1990s, one of the main cleavages within the radical left party family has been exactly this (non-)adoption of New Left issues (Gomez et al., 2016; Holesch et al., 2024). This research will refer to the two groups of parties as *progressive* (also termed post-materialist, New Left parties) and *conservative* (traditionalist, non-reformed), and treat terms used by previous research as analogies (cf. Braghiroli and Makarychev, 2016; Gomez et al., 2016; Holesch et al. 2024; Wagner, 2025).

Policy reactions to Russian aggression

Four major forms of support for Ukraine or punishment for Russia's aggression have been discussed and applied since the full-scale invasion (Wondreys et al., 2023; Wagner, 2025). Verbal condemnation was heard in speeches of politicians and resolutions of the European Parliament and the UN General Assembly (European Parliament, 2022; United Nations General Assembly, 2022). But reactions were not only declaratory in nature. The EU already had sanctions against Russia in place since its illegal capture of Crimea in

2014 and these were expanded to unforeseen breadth, covering almost two thousand individuals and five hundred private entities connected to breaches of international law (European Council, n.d.). Up until today, the EU and its member states have provided Ukraine with almost 70 billion euros in military aid and with over a hundred billion euros "to support Ukraine's overall economic, social, and financial resilience" (European Commission, 2025).

Theoretical expectations

As mentioned in the literature review, the key factor influencing radical left parties' attitudes towards the war in Ukraine is their stance on socio-cultural issues. Ideology has a strong impact on a party's foreign policy, especially for smaller parties on the fringes of the left-right spectrum (Hofmann & Martill, 2021; Hooghe et al., 2024). The following expectations cover the most relevant policy reactions to the full-scale invasion (Wondreys et al., 2024; Wagner, 2025).

1. Radical left parties frame the war differently
    a. Socio-culturally conservative parties do not blame Russia for starting or continuing the war
    b. Socio-culturally progressive parties blame Russia for starting or continuing the war

Impacts of the war like rising energy prices and militarization can understandably cause concern and shape party stances on concrete policy issues, but it is highly unlikely that a party will change its interpretation of the conflict altogether. Therefore, based on findings from the first year of the war, this research expects that progressive parties will keep blaming Russia for starting the conflict (Wondreys et al., 2024) and conservative RLPs will avoid the issue, or blame another actor (e.g. Ukraine, USA, NATO; Braghiroli & Makarychev, 2016) or factor (e.g. the military-industrial complex, the bourgeoisie; Escalona et al., 2023, p. 703). Progressive parties had little trouble integrating Ukraine's resistance into their anti-imperialist fight because they are at a maximum ideological distance from Russia, an authoritarian state with a long history of human rights and minority rights violations (Amnesty International, n.d.). RLPs of this type simply lack any real motivation to keep siding with Russia. Conservative parties, on the other hand, revere Russia's self-righteous campaign against Western values and see Russia as an ally against the US-led world order (Györi & Krekó, 2016). They are not so concerned with

Russia's record of human rights and agree with its conservative, anti-liberal policies such as the laws against "LGBT propaganda" (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Moreover, conservative RLPs have a different interpretation of the conflict, meaning that the radical left principle of respecting international law does not translate into holding Russia accountable (Rohac et al., 2017). From the perspective of conservative parties, Western/NATO expansionism is the ultimate cause of the conflict, making the Russian military campaign an act of "self-defense". This belief has potential to undermine RLP support for Ukraine in the long-term, because the reinvigorated prospect of Ukraine's NATO membership and Western (military) assistance could be re-interpreted as Western expansionism. Even parties which conceded that Russia launched the conflict could put blame on the West for continuing it, using the same language (Braghiroli & Makarychev, 2016; Wondreys et al., 2024).

2. Radical left parties are not united on sanctions against Russia
    a. Socio-culturally conservative parties oppose maintaining EU sanctions on Russia
    b. Socio-culturally progressive parties support maintaining or expanding EU sanctions on Russia

Support for sanctions is highly dependent on the previous question. A party who does not recognize Russia as an aggressor has no reason to support sanctions against it. Given the conservative RLPs' alignment with Russian narratives, it is logical to assume that they will oppose any form of sanctions on Russia. Nevertheless, the history of radical left opposition to sanctions is much deeper. The EU sanctions regime on Russia targets many individuals and companies but also uses indiscriminate instruments that affect the general population of both Russia (its expulsion from the SWIFT system, travel bans) and the EU (ban on imports of Russian fossil fuels; European Council, n.d.). The comprehensive nature of the sanctions can bring up memories of the sanctions placed on Iraq in 1990 by the UN. These have been described as "weapons of mass destruction" by leftist scholars (Abbott, 2023). For this reason, one might assume that the entire party family will oppose sanctions, but this is not the case. Progressive parties, who see Russia as the aggressor, naturally want to go beyond verbal condemnation and seek to aid Ukraine's war effort by stopping European cash flows into the Russian war economy. Progressive RLPs may voice concerns over the comprehensive nature of the sanctions but are unlikely to propose

their complete abolition, given that the impact of this measure has been proven (European Council, 2023).

3. Radical left parties are not united on the provision of military assistance and arms exports to Ukraine
    a. Socio-culturally conservative parties oppose the provision of military assistance and arms exports to Ukraine
    b. Socio-culturally progressive parties support the provision of military assistance and arms exports to Ukraine

Military aid is highly contentious among the radical left because it conflicts with several of its key principles – pacifism, anti-militarism, disarmament, and anti-interventionism (Wondreys et al., 2024; Wagner, 2025). From the perspective of radical left parties, flows of capital into the so-called military-industrial complex enable it to exert influence over politics and eventually drive a state towards militarism and expansionism (Escalona et al., 2023, p. 704). Fierce opposition is therefore to be expected from the conservative RLPs who see the provision of military aid or even selling weapons to Ukraine as proof of the West inciting war. Progressive RLPs should be able to justify this measure by voicing their unequivocal support for Ukraine, making a lapse from their pacifism in favor of anti-imperialist armed struggle and protecting Ukrainian civilians from genocide, using similar arguments as for the case of Palestine (Leopardi, 2024; Mullin, 2025). However, national context could also play a role. For example, the French have historically supported the idea of European strategic autonomy (Lippert et al., 2019), which goes in line with the European radical left's aim of reducing American influence on the continent (Escalona et al., 2023, p. 704). Assisting Ukraine could be seen as a step in achieving this goal, with the EU taking over the job of NATO in securing Ukrainian independence. On the other hand, the German *Left* (Die Linke) brandishes a motto of "never again war" and stands particularly strong in its pacifism and non-interventionism, decreasing the likelihood of it supporting military assistance (Rathbun, 2006). Finally, the conservative RLPs are likely to argue that, insofar, military aid has not yielded the result of a Ukrainian victory and only "prolongs" the war. By extension, this argument leads to the EU being blamed for escalating or feeding the attrition war. Of course, these claims would be made against the background of continued Russian attacks on Ukraine's civilian population (Human Rights Watch, 2025).

4. Radical left parties generally support the provision of non-military aid to Ukraine

International solidarity is one of the key tenets of radical left ideology (Escalona et al., 2023, p. 703). Even parties who do not see Russia as the invading power must recognize the struggle of ordinary Ukrainians. Radical left parties emphasize redistribution and there is no reason for Ukraine to be an exception (pp. 700-701). In their twisted logic, conservative RLPs who sympathize with Russia may also offer humanitarian help to ordinary Russians, but this does not contradict the expectation.

Methodology

This section will lay out the research design used and justify the methods chosen. It will present the criteria for case selection and elaborate on the final sample. This section will also describe the data collected and the developed coding frame.

Research design

This paper employs a qualitative content analysis research design to examine the discourse and stances of radical left parties and their members on the war in Ukraine. This approach is particularly useful in this task because it enables an in-depth analysis of language used by parties and their members and allows for notions outside of quantifiable metrics to be recorded (Toshkov, 2016). This separates it from methods such as quantitative analysis of roll-call-voting, which cannot capture the specific nuances in how parties (and their parliamentarians) frame the conflict in Ukraine (Toshkov, 2016, p. 122). This research draws on primary sources of empirical material, namely party programs for the 2024 European elections, as well as records of plenary speeches given by the parties' MEPs between February 24th, 2023 (one-year anniversary of the full-scale invasion) and April 4th 2024 (last plenary session of the European Parliament before the 2024 elections).

Case selection

When looking for radical left parties in the European Parliament (EP), The Left (GUE/NGL) presents itself as a logical starting point, being to the left of the Socialist & Democrats group. However, not all of its members are radical and not all radical left parties in the EP are its members. *The Palgrave Handbook of Radical Left Parties in Europe* leaves out the Dutch *Party for the Animals* (PvdD), the Irish *Sinn Féin* (SF), and one independent MEP and includes the *Communist Party of Greece* (KKE; Escalona,

Keith & March, 2023). In total, 39 MEPs from 18 RLPs sat in the 9th European Parliament, the biggest parties being *Die Linke* from Germany and *La France Insoumise*. The Northern, Western, and Southern regions of the EU were all well-represented by RLPs, but only one party came from Central and Eastern Europe – Czechia's Stačilo! (formerly the *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia;* Wagner, 2025).

This paper follows a diverse case selection technique, choosing cases that are expected to maximize variation of the sample (Toshkov, 2016; cf. Wondreys et al., 2024). Parties from all major geographic regions of the EU were selected and both RLP subtypes are evenly represented. Crucially, all parties in the sample had representation in the 9th European Parliament[1]. The following nine parties were selected:

Category	Party (Abbreviation)	Country
Conservative	Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht (BSW)	Germany
Conservative	Kommunistikó Kómma Elládas (KKE)	Greece
Conservative	Stačilo!	Czech Republic
Progressive	Partido Comunista Português (PCP)	Portugal
Progressive	Die Linke	Germany
Progressive	Enhedslisten	Denmark
Progressive	La France Insoumise (LFI; part of NFP)	France
Progressive	Podemos	Spain
Progressive	Vasemmistoliitto (Vas)	Finland

Party classification

The categorization of parties as progressive or conservative is based on the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (2024 wave), specifically the parties' assessed position on the gal/tan scale. Parties which favor post-materialist values such as expanded personal freedoms, abortion rights, same-sex marriage, and democratic participation gravitate towards the "GAL" end of the scale, whereas the "TAN" end is reserved for parties who reject these ideas in favor of order, tradition, and stability, believing that the government should be a firm moral authority on social and cultural issues (Rovny et al., 2025). RLPs above the middle value of five are treated as *conservative* by this analysis (Stačilo!, KKE, BSW) and those below five are treated as *progressive* (PCP, Die Linke, Enhedslisten, LFI, Podemos, Vas; see Figure 1).

[1] BSW originally as a fraction of Die Linke and Stačilo! originally as its predecessor, KSČM

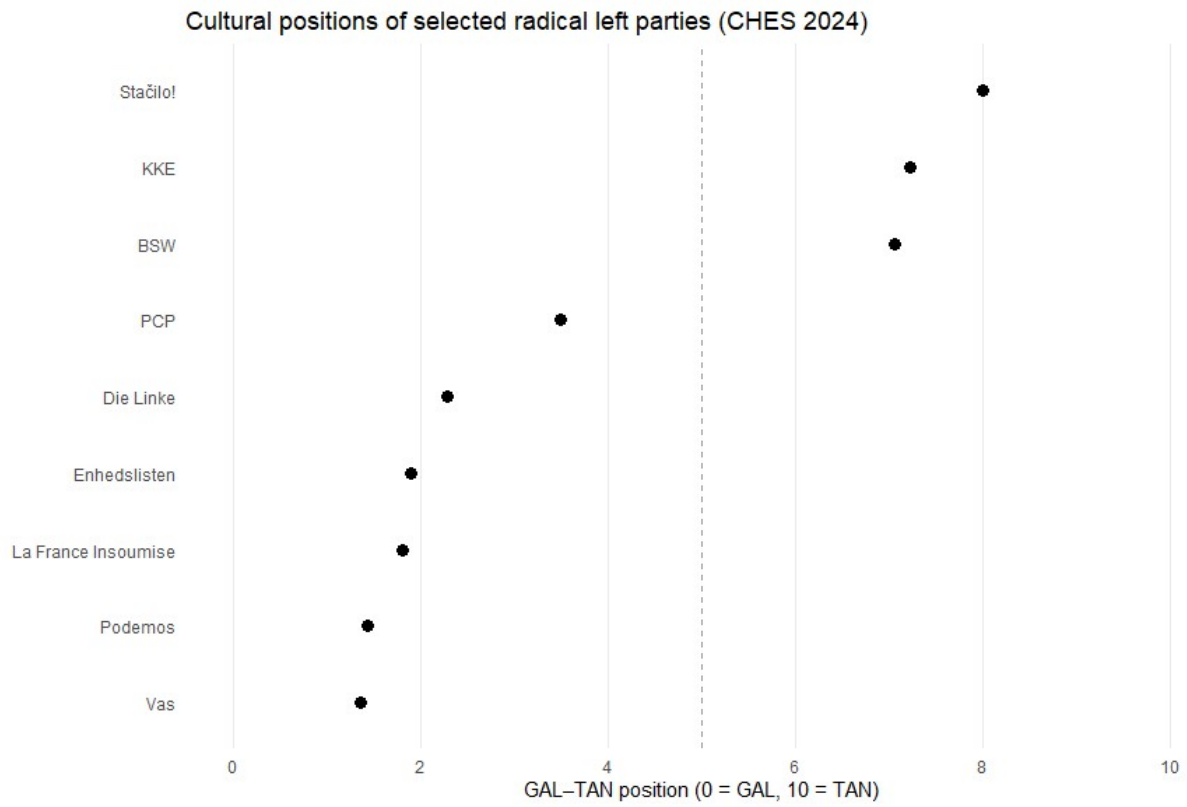

Figure 1. GAL/TAN positioning of the analyzed parties

Sampling strategy and data description

Plenary speeches including the words "Russia" or "Ukraine" in the title were retrieved from the EP archives. Party programs were collected directly from party websites, with two notable anomalies. *Stačilo!* published its program in ten topical installments, therefore only those referring to defense and security were selected. Greece's KKE published two documents, a *Call of the Central Committee for the European elections* and a *Presentation of the Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe for the European elections*. For a full record of the coded statements, see Appendix 1.

Coding frame

This coding frame was developed inductively based on the most debated foreign policy issues connected to the war (Holesch et al., 2024; Wondreys et al., 2024). The recording unit are sentences.

Category	Description	Indicator (key words)	Examples
Aggressor	Statements placing blame for the war's start or continuation on one of the involved parties (or a phenomenon)	Aggressor, invading power, special military operation, intervention, invasion, escalation	"Russia started the war" "NATO expansionism is to blame" "This war was caused by the military-industrial complex"
Sanctions	Statements in favor of or against sanctions on Russia; Statements on the EU sanction regime	Sanctions	"We demand higher sanctions on Russia." "Sanctions are ineffective and should be abolished"
Military aid	Statements on arms exports to Ukraine, provision of military aid	Military aid, arms exports	"We must support Ukraine by all means necessary, including military aid" "Arms exports are only prolonging the war and should be stopped."
Non-military aid	Statements on the provision of non-military aid (humanitarian, for refugees)	Humanitarian aid, solidarity, subsidies, grants, refugee help	"Ukraine's civilian population needs our financial assistance" "We must stay out of this war entirely and stop funding it in any way"

Aggressor

Without a shadow of doubt, Russia is the aggressor in its war against Ukraine and continues to attack Ukrainian cities, destroy civilian infrastructure. It abducted tens of thousands of children into Russia, a war crime amounting to genocide (Ödebrink, 2025). Russia violated the Budapest memorandum which saw Ukraine give up its nuclear arsenal in favor of Russia recognizing its full territorial sovereignty, as well as every ceasefire over the course of the current conflict (Shevchenko, 2025). Any mention of these crimes, the imperialist nature of the conflict, or similar statements assigning the blame for the

trigger or escalation of the conflict to Russia will be coded as Russia being the aggressor. Any other statements will be coded as Russia not being the aggressor, for example those blaming the war on great power conflict, NATO, or the military-industrial complex.

Sanctions

The European Union has greatly expanded the number of sanctions on Russia since the start of the full-scale invasion. RLPs can voice their support for the sanctions regime or express criticism. Since most RLPs are soft Eurosceptics, they are not expected to criticize the EU's prerogative to impose sanctions, only the nature or extent of the existing sanctions regime. Some may show concern about the "ordinary people" that the sanctions fall on. Any mention of sanctions is an indicator, positive or negative.

Military assistance

Indicators of this topic can range from discussions on the EU's military assistance to Ukraine to the EU's military structures (e.g. PESCO), past military engagements and interventions abroad (e.g. Yugoslavia), to the military build-up of individual EU member states.

Non-military assistance

The last category contains mentions of providing any material assistance to Ukraine that is not military in nature. Examples include sending financial aid, administrative aid, helping Ukrainian refugees inside the EU, forgiving Ukraine's debt held by EU member states, or funding the reconstruction of Ukraine.

Analysis and results

This section will present and interpret the results from the analyzed data, comparing them against the hypotheses and connect the results back to the theoretical framework. A following discussion will examine whether the results of this research are in line with previous academic findings.

Aggressor

Across the sample, progressive radical left parties generally identified Russia as the aggressor in the war against Ukraine. In line with the theoretical expectations, they explicitly criticized the conservatism, nationalism and militarism of Putin's Russia,

calling the invasion an act of imperialism (Die Linke, 2024, p. 66). Denmark's Enhedslisten linked Viktor Orbán's Hungary with Russia's ideology in its criticism, placing themselves in opposition to conservative forces within the EU (Enhedslisten, 2024, p. 17). Die Linke believes that the war feeds the "military-industrial complex" and energy companies, but does not equivocate on who the aggressor is (Russian president Vladimir Putin; Die Linke, 2024, p. 66). Even though they believe the war is being co-opted to increase military spending and arms companies' share value (p. 33), they do not seem to believe that this is why the war started. However, they do call for a diplomatic end to it in favor of "feeding the war of attrition" (Die Linke, 2024, pp. 9-10). Spain's Podemos diverged from the expectation and blamed the "military-industrial complex and warlords" but it is unclear who they meant as the "warlord" (Podemos, 2024). The Portuguese Communist Party did not place blame for starting the war on any specific actor in its program, probably in an attempt to avoid the issue, but it did blame the EU for prolonging the war (PCP, 2024, p. 22). On the conservative side, Stačilo! took an ambivalent stance and claimed that "Russia let itself be provoked by Western expansionism" (Stačilo, 2024a, p. 2). In other words, a slip in Russian self-control is seen as the trigger but Western expansionism is treated as the underlying cause. BSW and KKE took more extreme stances, calling the conflict "a proxy war between Russia and the West" and "a war between capitalist Ukraine and capitalist Russia", respectively (BSW, 2024, p. 14; KKE, 2024b, p. 2). Furthermore, both parties believe that the EU and the West are prolonging the war. For the most part, these findings are in line with the first theoretical expectation – progressive parties blamed Russia for starting and continuing the war, while conservative RLPs aligned themselves with the Russian narrative.

The lack of anti-Russian sentiment from the parties of the former Eastern Bloc may come as a surprise, given the decade-long occupation and violent repression by the Soviet Union. However, the BSW and Stačilo! trace their political lineage to the USSR-aligned communist parties of East Germany and Czechoslovakia, meaning that they either dispute or condone the violent history of their respective countries' relationship with the USSR. Die Linke also traces its roots to the former *Socialist Unity Party of Germany*, but purged its most pro-Russian members after the start of the full-scale invasion and the BSW split-off (Wurthmann &Wagner, 2025).

Sanctions

Observed party positions on sanctions are also in line with the theoretical expectation. Conservative RLPs explicitly mention the following reasons against sanctions on Russia: 1) Lack of effect on the Russian economy, evasion of sanctions (BSW, 2024; Konečná, 2023); 2) Rising energy costs for EU citizens (BSW, 2024; Konečná, 2023); and 3) Impact on ordinary people in general (Konečná, 2023). Conversely, progressive RLPs vowed to support Ukraine in every way possible and aim to stop European money entering the Russian economy, as well as to decrease dependence on Russian resources (Vas, 2024; Enhedslisten, 2024). The program of Die Linke (2024) was in line with expectations but offered nuance, decrying comprehensive sanctions which hurt the ordinary population while advocating for strong sanctions on Russia's oligarchs and military-industrial complex. This is a rare instance of a party using the "military-industrial complex" discourse against Russia – usually, the Western/American complex is blamed for the war (Podemos, 2024, p. 114). Die Linke's position is also starkly different to Stačilo's or BSW's, utilizing arguments based on internationalism while the latter two argue mainly with the impact of sanctions on their domestic constituencies – a paradoxical, but not rare moment of nationalism among the radical left (Halikiopoulou et al., 2012). Podemos and PCP were the only two parties which outright defied expectations, being progressive RLP against sanctions (PCP, 2024, p. 8; Podemos, 2024, p. 114). This is possibly due to the low dependence of Iberia on Russian gas and therefore low general awareness of how important trade with the EU is for Russia, or the relatively high issue salience of the American sanctions on Hispanophone countries such as Cuba and Venezuela. The aim here seems to be to avoid accusations of hypocrisy (Capasso, 2023). Moreover, the PCP is an unreformed communist party and doesn't place as much weight on post-materialist values as other progressive RLPs (Escalona et al., 2023, p. 452).

Military aid

Military assistance turned out to be a much more controversial subject than expected. Only two analyzed parties support continued arms exports to Ukraine and provision of military aid: the Finnish Vas and Danish Enhedslisten. In fact, Enhedslisten called for expanding sanctions (Villumsen, 2023). Nordic RLPs consistently exhibit higher assertiveness towards Russia than their peers (Wondreys et al., 2024). These results show

how historical experiences with Russia and individual party origins can affect their persuasions, challenging earlier quantitative models which found little or no effect of proximity to Russia or Ukraine on RLP stances towards the conflict (Onderco, 2019; Wagner 2025). Other progressive parties were opposed – namely Die Linke and Podemos, who saw military aid as ineffective in terms of ending the conflict. The parties claimed that it only prolongs the war and causes unnecessary suffering for the general population (Die Linke, 2024; Podemos, 2024). All conservative parties were opposed, writing that military aid to Ukraine only drives the (Western) arms industry. Allegedly, arms can end up in the wrong hands or trigger escalation (Konečná, 2023; Wondreys et al., 2024). By and large, RLPs wanted to leave or abolish NATO (KKE, 2024b, p. 4; Stačilo, 2024a, p. 1), or significantly reform the EU's relationship with it. La France Insoumise envisioned a European Defense Union of sorts (LFI, 2024, p. 95), while Die Linke rejected any further militarization of the EU and called for a defunding of its defense structures like PESCO (Die Linke, 2024, p. 66).

Non-military aid

In contrast to arms exports, offering non-military aid to Ukraine should be perfectly acceptable for RLPs, according to their principles of solidarity and internationalism. However, parties who do not recognize Ukraine as the victim of aggression (mostly conservative) diverged from the theoretical expectation. The BSW and Stačilo! explicitly opposed sending any support to Ukraine (BSW, 2024; Stačilo!, 2024a), while the PCP and KKE ignored the issue. The cleavage is clearly visible in this category because progressive parties generally supported various forms of non-military aid: Podemos advocated for humanitarian aid, Die Linke for helping refugees and conscientious objectors (another example of its staunch anti-militarism), and there was a broad consensus on forgiving Ukraine's debt and opposing any conditionality of the provided subsidies on neoliberal reforms or austerity (Die Linke, 2024; NFP, 2024; Podemos, 2024).

Furthermore, all analyzed parties except Vas and Enhedslisten advocated for an immediate diplomatic end to the war. While based on RLPs' pacifist traditions, this election promise was likely given much higher salience by rising war fatigue among the electorate. Of the proposed frameworks towards peace, most parties put their confidence in multilateral institutions such as the UN or OSCE (BSW, 2024, p. 3; Die Linke, 2024,

p. 66; Podemos, 2024 p. 114; Stačilo!, 2024a, p. 1), and suggested Brazil, India, and China as mediators (Die Linke, p. 66; Podemos, p. 114). This reflects RLPs' preference for multilateral relations and a foreign policy oriented away from the Euro-Atlantic security system (Escalona et al., 2023, p. 703). Some RLPs concluded that the global order is already multipolar, while others found that the American unipolar moment is still in the process of decomposition (Stačilo!, 2024a, p. 1). In either case, they argue that the global order must be based on respect for international law (Die Linke, p. 66).

Lastly, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) expressed drastically different views than the rest of the sample. As the only fully Marxist-Leninist party in the sample, its program for the 2024 European elections was staunchly Eurosceptic and sought to replace the EU (and NATO) with a global socialist regime. In turn, the KKE opposed "all involvement" in the conflict (KKE, 2024b, p. 2).

Conclusion

In summary, radical left parties are a heterogeneous group with diverging stances on Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The key factor determining a party's relationship with Russia is its position on socio-cultural issues. Parties which share the social conservatism of Putin's Russia are more likely to view the regime as a legitimate counter-hegemon to the Western liberal capitalist order. They adhere to the "enemy of my enemy is my friend" principle and often adopt Kremlin narratives about Ukraine. Progressive RLPs, on the other hand, are at a maximum ideological distance from Putin's conservative Russia and have little motivation to adopt the Russian perspective on international relations. They are more likely see Ukrainian resistance as a part of their global anti-imperialist struggle and to identify Russia as a violator of international law.

In line with theoretical expectations, radical left parties were split in their reactions to the Russian full-scale invasion according to the cleavage on socio-cultural issues. Most progressive parties condemned Russia, supported the EU sanctions regime and approved of non-military aid (e.g. debt relief, refugee help, humanitarian aid). The increasing right-wing national radicalism of Putin's Russia has alienated progressive RLPs. On the contrary, conservative RLPs shied away from condemning Russia's aggression and consistently opposed EU policy aimed to weaken Russia and/or support Ukraine. Both subtypes opposed sending military aid to Ukraine and called for a diplomatic solution to the conflict, a consensus showcasing the strong anti-militarist, pacifist tradition of the

party family (Escalona et al., 2023, p. 704). Denmark's Enhedslisten and Finland's Vas were the only exceptions, likely due to their geographical-historical context and progressive ideology.

The temporal scope of this research was limited by practical considerations and future research may expand the timeframe even further, beyond the 2024 EP elections. This will also enable them to reflect on which parties were successful with their programs. Scholars could also analyze more party materials, such as speeches from national parliaments, press releases, or media appearances.

Russia's continued onslaught on Ukrainian sovereignty can make it difficult to understand how any party or individual may consistently question the nature of the conflict. This research lays out possible motivations for this stance among radical left parties, the most frequent offender in equivocating on the conflict (Holesch et al., 2024). The results above fill a gap in research on the RLP foreign policy developments in the medium term and reveal the diversity of opinion within the party family that was not always captured by previous studies. Moreover, the selected research design encompasses more policy areas than previous studies which focused only on sanctions, condemnation, or assertiveness.

This research proves that all radical left parties are not the same. Previous studies often made generalizations about the radical left party family and overlooked nuances between different kinds of RLPs. When assessing the party family's stance on Russia and the war in Ukraine, scholars should distinguish between the progressive and conservative subtypes. This research proves the impact of post-materialist issues on geopolitics.

Bibliography

Abbott, J. (2023, July 28). Just How Bad Were UN Sanctions Against Iraq? *Jacobin*. https://jacobin.com/2023/07/just-how-bad-were-un-sanctions-against-iraq

Aktürk, S. (2019). Five faces of Russia's soft power. Far left, far right, Orthodox Christian, Russophone, and ethnoreligious networks. *Ponars Eurasia Policy Memo 623*. Available at: https://www.ponarseurasia.org/five-faces-of-russia-s-soft-power-far-left-far-right-orthodox-christian-russophone-and-ethnoreligiousnetworks/

Amnesty International. (n.d.). *Human rights in Russia*. https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/europe-and-central-asia/eastern-europe-and-central-asia/russia/report-russia/

Andry, A. D. (2022). *Social Europe, the road not taken: the left and european integration in the long 1970s* (First edition.). Oxford University Press.

Botella, J., Ramiro, L., & Kalyvas, S. (2003). The crisis of communism and party change: the evolution of West European communist and post-communist parties. *Institut de Ciències Polítiques Socials.*

Braghiroli, S., & Makarychev, A. (2016). Russia and its supporters in Europe: trans-ideology *à la carte*?. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies, 16:2,* 213-233. https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2016.1156343

Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht. (2024). Programm für die Europawahl 2024. https://bsw-vg.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/BSW_Europawahlprogramm_2024.pdf

Capasso, M. (2023). Theorising Sanctions as Warfare: Insights from the US-Led Aggression on Libya. *World Review of Political Economy*, *14*(4), 555–584. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48755825

Charalambous, G. (2011). All the shades of red: Examining the radical left's euroscepticism. *Contemporary Politics*, *17*(3), 299–320. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569775.2011.597142

Charalambous, G., & Ioannou, G. (Eds.). (2020). *Left radicalism and populism in Europe*. Routledge.

Communist Party of Greece. (2024a). Call from the Central Committee of the KKE for the European elections. https://www.komep.gr/m-article/Kalesma-tis-KE-toy-KKE-gia-tis-Eyroekloges/

Communist Party of Greece. (2024b). Presentation of the Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe for the European elections of June 9th. https://www.kke.gr/article/Paroysiasi-tis-Diakiryksis-ton-Kommoynistikon-kai-Ergatikon-Kommaton-tis-Eyropis-gia-tis-eyroekloges-tis-9is-Ioyni-000%E2%80%A6

Chryssogelos, A.-S. (2010). Undermining the West from Within: European Populists, the Us and Russia. *European View*, *9*(2), 267–277. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12290-010-0135-1

Council of Europe. (2026). *The Commissioner condemns the attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure and appeals for urgent humanitarian support*. Council of Europe. https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/the-commissioner-condemns-the-attacks-on-ukrainian-energy-infrastructure-and-appeals-for-urgent-humanitarian-support

Die Linke. (2024). Programm zur Europawahl 2024. https://www.die-linke.de/europawahl/wahlprogramm-zur-europawahl/

Dunphy, R., & March, L. (2020). *The European left party*. Manchester University Press.

Enhedslisten. (2024). Valgprogram EU-parlamentsvalget 2024. https://enhedslisten.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/EP_Valgprogram_2024.pdf

Escalona, F., Keith, D., & March, L. (2023). *The Palgrave Handbook of Radical Left Parties in Europe*. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56264-7

European Commission. (2025). *EU assistance to Ukraine*. European Commission. https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-solidarity-ukraine/eu-assistance-ukraine_en

European Council. (n.d.). *Timeline - EU sanctions against Russia*. European Council. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions-against-russia/timeline-sanctions-against-russia/

European Council. (2023). Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy. European Council. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/impact-sanctions-russian-economy/

European Parliament. (2022, March 1). European Parliament resolution of 1 March 2022 on the Russian aggression against Ukraine (2022/2564(RSP)). https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0052_EN.pdf

Fagerholm, A. (2024). Sympathy or Criticism? The European Far Left and Far Right React to Russia's 2022 Invasion of Ukraine. *Europe - Asia Studies*, *76*(6), 829–850. https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2024.2347850

Fagerholm, A. (2025). Far left and far right party reactions to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. *West European Politics*, *48*(4), 793–819. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2024.2335455

Golosov, G. v. (2020). Useful, but Not Necessarily Idiots: The Ideological Linkages among the Putin-Sympathizer Parties in the European Parliament. *Problems of Post-Communism*, *67*(1), 53–63. https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2018.1530941

Gomez, R., Morales, L., & Ramiro, L. (2016). Varieties of Radicalism: Examining the Diversity of Radical Left Parties and Voters in Western Europe. *West European Politics*, *39*(2), 351–379. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2015.1064245

Gomez, R., Ramiro, L., Le Lann, Y., Cugnata, G., & Aja, J. (2024). Job insecurity and vote for radical parties: A four-country study. *Electoral Studies*, *90*, Article 102826. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2024.102826

Gomez, R., Ramiro, L., & Rori, L. (2025). Critical junctures and party innovation: the transformation of radical left parties in Greece, Portugal and Spain. South European Society and Politics, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2024.2439247

Györi, L. & Krekó, P. (2016). Don't ignore the left! Connections between Europe's radical left and Russia. *Opendemocracy*. Available at: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/don-t-ignore-left-connections-between-europe-s-radical-left-and-ru/

Halikiopoulou, D., Nanou, K., & Vasilopoulou, S. (2012). The paradox of nationalism: The common denominator of radical right and radical left euroscepticism.

European Journal of Political Research, *51*(4), 504–539. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2011.02050.x

Hendl, T., & Durdiyeva, S. (2025). On Collateral Damage, Selective Anti-Imperialism and the Path to Liberation. American Communist History, 24(1–4), 53–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/14743892.2025.2501407

Hofmann, S. C., & Martill, B. (2021). The party scene: New directions for political party research in foreign policy analysis. *International Affairs*, *97*(2), 305–322. https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaa165

Holesch, A., Zagórski, P., & Ramiro, L. (2024). European radical left foreign policy after the invasion of Ukraine: shifts in assertiveness towards Russia. *Political Research Exchange*, *6*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/2474736X.2024.2350245

Hooghe, L., Marks, G., Bakker, R., Jolly, S., Polk, J., Rovny, J., Steenbergen, M., & Vachudova, M. A. (2024). The Russian threat and the consolidation of the West: How populism and EU-skepticism shape party support for Ukraine. *European Union Politics*, *25*(3), 459–482. https://doi.org/10.1177/14651165241237136

Human Rights Watch. (2023, November 30). *Russia: Supreme Court bans "LGBT movement" as "Extremist."* Human Rights Watch. https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/11/30/russia-supreme-court-bans-lgbt-movement-extremist

Human Rights Watch. (2025). *Ukraine: Escalating Russian Attacks on Civilians*. Human Rights Watch. https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/05/22/ukraine-escalating-russian-attacks-civilians

Inglehart, R. (1977). *The silent revolution : changing values and political styles among Western publics* (1st ed.). Princeton University Press.

Keith, D. (2018). Opposing Europe, Opposing Austerity: Radical left parties and the Eurosceptic debate. In B. Leruth, N. Startin, & S. Usherwood (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Euroscepticism* (1st ed., Vol. 1, pp. 86–99). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315464015-10

Keith, D., & March, L. (2023). The United Kingdom. In L. March, F. Escalona, & D. Keith (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Radical Left Parties in Europe* (pp. 541–569). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56264-7_19

Konečná, K. (2023). Conclusions of the European Council meeting of 29-30 June 2023, in particular the recent developments in the war against Ukraine and recent events in Russia (debate). https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2023-07-12-INT-3-025-0000_CS.html

Kuzio, T. (2022). *Russian Nationalism and the Russian-Ukrainian War* (1st ed.). Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003191438

La France Insoumise. (2024). Le programme de l'Union Populaire. https://lafranceinsoumise.fr/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/PROGRAMME-UNION-POPULAIRE_EURO-2024.pdf

Lenin, V. (1915). *Lenin: on the slogan for a United States of Europe*. https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/aug/23.htm

Leopardi, F. S. (2024, July 2nd). *The Left Has Played a Key Role in the Palestinian Struggle*. Jacobin. https://jacobin.com/2024/07/palestine-left-pflp-habash-fatah-plo-hamas

Lippert, B., Ondarza, N. V., & Perthes, V. (2019). European strategic autonomy: actors, issues, conflicts of interests.

March, L., & Mudde, C. (2005). What's Left of the Radical Left? The European Radical Left After 1989: Decline and Mutation. *Comparative European Politics*, *3*(1), 23–49. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.cep.6110052

March, L. (2011). *Radical left parties in Europe*. Routledge.

Meijers, M. J. (2017). Contagious Euroscepticism: The impact of Eurosceptic support on mainstream party positions on European integration. *Party Politics*, *23*(4), 413-423.

Mullin, G. (2025, Nov 20). *The Ten Stages of the Russian Genocide in Ukraine*. Genocide Watch. https://www.genocidewatch.com/single-post/the-ten-stages-of-the-russian-genocide-in-ukraine

Ödebrink, C. (2025). *Russian abductions and deportations of Ukrainian children*. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. https://www.oscepa.org/en/documents/ad-hoc-committees-and-working-groups/parliamentary-support-team-for-ukraine/5294-russian-abductions-and-deportations-of-ukrainian-children-by-carina-oedebrink-eng/file

Onderco, M. (2019). Partisan views of Russia: Analyzing European party electoral manifestos since 1991. *Contemporary Security Policy*, *40*(4), 526–547. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2019.1661607

Patton, F. (2024). The Ukraine War as a Driver of Intraparty Conflict: Germany's Left Party and the AfD. *German Politics*, 33:3, 463-488. https://doi.org/10.1080/09644008.2024.2326466

Piccolino, G., & Puleo, L. (2024). Ideological drivers of participatory democracy in Europe: disentangling the different approaches of populism and post-materialist politics. *European Political Science*, *23*(2), 115–132. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41304-023-00432-x

Podemos. (2024). Por un futuro de paz y derechos Programa electoral Elecciones europeas 2024. https://www.newtral.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Programa-PODEMOS-elecciones-europeas-2024.pdf?x95607

Pokalova, E. (2023). The Wagner Group in Africa: Russia's Quasi-State Agent of Influence. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2023.2231642

Portuguese Communist Party. (2024). Compromisso do PCP para as Eleições ao Parlamento Europeu 2024. https://www.pcp.pt/compromisso-do-pcp-para-eleicoes-ao-parlamento-europeu-2024

Robinson, P. (2019). *Russian conservatism*. Northern Illinois University Press. https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501747366

Rohac, D., Gyori L., & Zgut E. (2017). Populism in Europe and its Russian Love Affair. *American Enterprise Institute*.

Rovny, J., Polk, J., Bakker, R., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., Marks, G., Steenbergen, M., & Vachudova, M. A. (2025). The 2024 Chapel Hill Expert Survey on political

party positioning in Europe: Twenty-five years of party positional data. *Electoral Studies*, *97*, 102981. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2025.102981

Shevchenko, V. (2025). Attempts to reach ceasefire in Ukraine littered with years of failure. *BBC*. https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c1wdllj8lwxo

Szczerbiak, A., & Taggart, P. (2008). *Opposing Europe?: Volume 1: Case Studies and Country Surveys* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press, Incorporated.

Stačilo!. (2024a). Pragmatická zahraniční politika v multipolárním světě a diplomacie na prvním místě. www.stacilo.cz

Stačilo!. (2024b). Vnější a vnitřní bezpečnost. www.stacilo.cz

Toshkov, D. (2016) Research Design in Political Science. Palgrave Macmillan.

Unan, A., & Klüver, H. (2025). Europeans' attitudes toward the EU following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. *Political Science Research and Methods*, *13*(4), 1025–1030. https://doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2024.62

United Nations General Assembly. (2022). United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES-11/1. https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/ES-11/1

Vasemmistoliitto. (2024). Europarlamenttivaaliohjelma 2024. https://vasemmisto.fi/eurovaalit/eurovaaliohjelma/

Verbeek, B., & Zaslove, A. (2016). Italy: a case of mutating populism? *Democratization*, *23*(2), 304–323. https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2015.1076213

Villumsen, N. (2023). Effectiveness of the EU sanctions on Russia (debate). https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2023-10-17-INT-2-025-0000_EN.html

Vote results: The Russian aggression against Ukraine. (2022, March 1). HowTheyVote.eu. https://howtheyvote.eu/votes/140111

Wagner, W. (2025). Contesting Western support for Ukraine. The radical left in the European Parliament. *Journal of European Integration*, *47*(5), 629–651. https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2024.2424186

Williams, C., & Ishiyama, J. (2018). Responding to the left: the effect of far-left parties on mainstream party Euroskepticism. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, *28*(4), 443-466.

Wondreys, J., March, L., & Pytlas, B. (2025). 'My enemy's enemy is my friend'? European radical left parties' response to Russia's war in Ukraine. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, *27*(3), 696–719. https://doi.org/10.1177/13691481241284204

Wurthmann, L. C., & Wagner, S. (2025). On the Association of Attitudes Towards NATO and Weapon Deliveries for Ukraine with Vote Intentions in Germany. *German Politics*, *34*(1), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/09644008.2024.2372562