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The Europeanisation of the Lithuanian party system: an uneven and limited process

Abstract:

The paper deals with the Europeanisation of the Lithuanian political parties from 1995 until today. The research question is to evaluate whether the European Union (EU) had an impact on the party system in Lithuania: How did the Lithuanian parties develop contacts with their European counterparts? Do they have one or several visions of the "Return to Europe"? How do they use the EU dimension in the internal arena? Are some parties more "Eurosceptic"? Presenting a framework for the analysis on Europeanisation and party systems, Ladrech (2002) identified five areas: (1) policy/programmatic content, (2) organisation, (3) patterns of party competition, (4) party-government relations, and (5) relations beyond the national party system. This paper focuses on the topics 1 and 5. First, it is explained, how the Lithuanian party system has integrated into the pan-European political parties' networks. The "traditional" Lithuanian parties, established in the 1990s, have developed deep and stable contacts with their European counterparts. The "new" parties, founded in the beginning of the 2000s, have waited until Lithuania's EU accession to take position in the European arena. Secondly, the paper analyses the content of the parties' manifestos on the EU dimension in the pre- and post-accession period. From 2000, most of Lithuanian parties take into consideration the EU as a new environment. Their manifestos present a uniform and consensual vision of the European integration. After 2004, the EU almost disappears from the manifestos prepared for national elections. Lithuanian parties focus on the defense of national interests and seek to Europeanise the energy issue, in order to break Lithuania's energy dependence towards Russia. All in all, the investigation of these two areas reveals that the EU has a small impact on the Lithuanian party system, mainly because of the strong consensus in the elite on the EU matters.

Key Words: Europeanisation - political parties – Lithuania

Introduction

As a part of the Soviet Union, the Baltic States were for fifty years under the domination of the Communist Party. Political parties were (re)created for the first free elections organised in February/March 1990. After Lithuania had applied for the EU in December 1995, the political parties were forced to get more involved in the EU affairs and to develop contacts with their European counterparts, although their ideological identity was not clearly defined. The adaptation of Post-communist party system to the EU governance is very salient for the democratisation and Europeanisation of the EU Candidate States, because the political parties are intermediary actors between the Government and the citizens. They can make easier or more difficult the understanding of the European policies by the citizens.

The aim of this article is to determine which impact the EU had on the Lithuanian party system since 1995: How did the Lithuanian parties develop contacts with their European counterparts? Do they have one or several visions of the "Return to Europe"? How do they use the EU dimension on the internal scene? Are some parties more "Eurosceptic"? Early analysis on the "old" EU member states suggested that the EU dimension did not seem to have a "significant direct impact" on the mechanics of the party systems (Mair 2000). The few existing studies on the Europeanisation of the Post-communist party systems (Lewis 2005, Lewis/Mansfeldova 2006) confirm that the EU impact has been indirect, but much more intense. Because of their instability and fluidity, the party systems of Central and Eastern European states could have been more exposed to the EU influence than their West European counterparts, which are established since a long time and have a clear ideological profile. Moreover the pressures of the Eastern Enlargement were so intense and concentrated on a short lapse of time, that they may have been a destabilising factor for the CEE party systems.

Regarding the Lithuanian case we start from the hypothesis that the EU had only a small impact on the party system, mainly because of the strong consensus in the elite on the EU membership. Presenting a framework for the analysis on Europeanisation and party systems, Ladrech (2002) identified five areas of potential investigation: (1) policy/programmatic content, (2) organization, (3) patterns of party competition, (4) party-government relations, and (5) relations beyond the national party system. This paper relies on the topics 1 and 5, because both give a horizontal and top-down approach of the Europeanisation concept. The topics 2, 3 and 4 are more difficult to be investigated and measured: the research time and space available in this paper are too limited to give a deep analysis on these topics. Moreover, it seems that in the Lithuanian case, the EU dimension didn't have a very strong impact on the parties' organization[1], the patterns of party competition[2] and the party-government relations.[3] In this paper, we will first explain, how the

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[1] From the very beginning, the Lithuanian political parties, as their Central and Eastern European counterparts, have built their structures according to the West European model. The EU Accession didn't change the parties' organization very much. In some countries, the election of parliamentarians to the EU Parliament provoked a turnover in the parties' executive. In Lithuania, the change in the executive of Homeland Union/the Lithuanian Conservatives (TS/LK) preceded the European elections: Andrius Kubilius became in May 2003 the leader of Homeland Union instead of Vytautas Landsbergis, elected in the EU Parliament in June 2004.

[2] In Lithuania, the patterns of party competition were not impacted by the EU dimension. The topics related to the EU didn't polarised the parties or the electorate. The elite consensus on Lithuania's EU membership was strong. The few Eurosceptic parties were located on the margins of the political landscape. All major parties were in favor of the EU. Even the agrarian party has moderately supported the EU membership (Jurkynas 2005:

Lithuanian party system has integrated into the European political parties' networks. Secondly, we will analyse the content of the parties' manifestos on the EU.

1. The integration of the Lithuanian political parties into the European parties' networks

The transnational cooperation between the parties is often considered as an important Europeanising factor in the academic literature. In the Lithuanian case, it must be differentiated between the "old" and the "new" parties. The "old" parties (TS/LK, LKDP, LDDP, LSDP, LLS, LCS), which were (re)created at the beginning of the 1990s, became members of European parties long before the elections for the European Parliament in June 2004. The "new" parties (NS/SL, DP, LDP, VNDPS) created after 2000, had not developed contacts with European counterparts and were still looking for an ideological identity on the national and European scene.

1. 1. The « old » parties : an early cooperation with the European parties

The Lithuanian political parties, (re)created at the beginning of the 1990s, tried rapidly to join their European counterparts, in order to obtain more legitimacy and financing. There were three possible ways to develop transnational contacts: the historical parties (LSDP, LKDP) have benefited from the transnational links created during their exile; the political parties created at the beginning of the 1990s have integrated into their European federations in the second part of the 1990s (TS/LK, LLS); and some parties were excluded (LDDP) or without European affiliation (LCS).

The Social Democratic Party of Lithuania *(Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija* LSDP) and the Christian Democratic Party of Lithuania (*Lietuvos krikščionių demokratų partija* LKDP) present similar paths. The LSDP was founded in 1896 and the LKDP in 1905. Their members participated to the national Council, which declared in 1918 the independence of Lithuania, to the first Constituent Assembly and the Interwar political life. After the Second World War, their leaders were in exile and integrated the transnational structures founded by the parties, which were forbidden in the Eastern Bloc. The LSDP integrated the Socialist Union of Central-Eastern Europe, which became in 1951 an organisation associated to the Socialist International. In August 1967, the LSDP transferred its headquarter from Paris to New York, but its members remained present in Great Britain and Germany. In April 1989, the LSDP was restored in Lithuania. The Socialist Union of Central-Eastern Europe was dissolved in 1990 and the LSDP integrated the Party of European Socialists (PES). The LKDP participated also to the International of Christian-democrats founded in 1947 and to the Christian Democratic Union of Central Europe created in 1950. In 1993 the LKDP became a full member of the European Union of Christian-democrats (EUCD). But, when the EUCD integrated the European People Party (EPP), the LKDP was recognised only as associate member, despite the

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156 ; Duvold/Jurkynas 2006 : 107). It seems that the transformation from a bipolar party system to a multipolar party system, which took place in the 2000s, cannot be related to the EU dimension (Duvold/Jurkynas 2006 : 111).
[3] The topic 4 regarding the party-government relations is almost impossible to investigate before 2004. First, the government members could not participate into the EU decision-making process before Lithuania's EU accession. Secondly, the asymmetrical negotiations between the Lithuanian government and the EU resulted in uniting the parties' basis to the European project of their leaders.

negotiations and protests of its members.[4] It's possible that the numerous scissions in the Lithuanian Christian democracy[5] have prevented the LKDP to become a full member of the EPP. In the same time, Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives (*Tévynės sąjunga/Lietuvos Konservatoriai* TS/LK) became a full member of the EPP in 1996. TS/LK had already cooperated before in the Assembly of the Council of Europe with the European Democratic Union (EDU).[6]

The LSDP and the LKDP are historical parties which have benefited from external help during the democratic transition, but they became in the 1990s the satellites of bigger parties (LDDP, TS/LK). In both cases, they were absorbed. The LSDP and the Democratic Labor Party of Lithuania (*Lietuvos demokratinė darbo partija* LDDP) established in 2000 an alliance for the legislative elections and merged the following year under the historical name of the LSDP. Thanks to this fusion, the ex-Communists of the LDDP could get rid of their Communist past and find a new legitimacy in the social-democratic values. Moreover, the LDDP could finally integrate the Socialist International and the PES, into which they could not enter in the 1990s.[7] In 2008, Homeland Union (TS/LK) and the LKDP merged under the name Homeland Union- Christians democrats of Lithuania (*Tévynės Sąjunga - Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai,* TS/LKD). Thanks to this merging, the small LKDP could finally become a full member of the EPP.

The Liberal Union of Lithuania (*Lietuvos liberalų sąjunga* LLS), created in November 1990, became in 1997 a full member of the Liberal International and an associate member of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR). In October 2000, the LLS obtained the statute of full member in the ELDR. The LLS, the Center Union of Lithuania (*Lietuvos centro sąjunga* LCS) and the Modern Christian-Democratic Union (MKDS) merged in April 2003, in order to form the Liberal and Centre Union (*Liberalų ir centro sąjunga* LCS). The party confirmed its liberal ideology by keeping the transnational contacts with the ELDR. Some members of the former LCS refused the new liberal orientation of the party and founded a new centrist party: The National Center Party *(Nacionaline Centro Partija).*[8] The slogan of its program prepared for the European elections was "Euro-realists for the national interests" (June 2004) and revealed the new Eurosceptic profile of the centrists in Lithuania. However the Party has no European or international affiliation and is not represented in the Parliament.

At the time of Lithuania's EU Accession, the "traditional" Lithuanian parties joined naturally their ideological family in the European Parliament: the conservatives joined the EPP, the Social-democrats the socialist group and the LCS the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe. In the programs prepared for the European elections, the "old" parties presented their contacts with their European

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[4] Interview with Algirdas Saudargas, 2010.11.9.

[5] The LKDP was officially recreated in February 1990 and Viktoras Petkus was elected President of the party. But rapidly he founded a concurrent party: the Union of the Christian Democrats (*Krikščionių demokratų sąjungą* KDS). In 1998, some dissident members of the LKDP created a new party: the Modern Christian-Democratic Union (*Moderniųjų krikščionių demokratų sąjunga* MKDS).

[6] Interview with Vytautas Landsbergis, 2011.03.24

[7] According to V. P. Andriukaitis, it was very difficult in the 1990s to have two left-wing parties in competition. The LSDP motivations for a merging were essentially to gain more political power in the domestic arena. According to V. J. Paleckis, the motivations of the LDDP were double, internal and external. It was important to prove to the public opinion that the LDDP was not anymore isolated in the international arena. Interviews with V. J. Paleckis (2011.03.18) and V. P. Andriukaitis (2011.06.14).

[8] In May 2005, the Party changes its name and became the Lithuanian Center Party (*Lietuvos Centro partija*).

counterparts as an asset. The LSDP declared several times to be "friends with the Socialists of Europe" (program LSDP, June 2004). The Conservatives (TS/LK) and the Christian Democrats (LKDP) described the EPP as the most powerful political force in the EU Parliament. The collaboration with the European parties was clearly considered as a guarantee for legitimacy and efficiency.

Table 1: The main Lithuanian political parties

Abbreviation	Names	Ideological position	(re)creation/scission/fusion
DP	*Darbo partija* The Labour Party	Center-left	created in 2003 merged in 2011 with the NS/SL
TT	*Liberalų demokratų partija* The Liberal Democratic Party *Tvarka ir Teisingumas* Order and Justice	Right Nationalism Euroscepticism	created in 2002 renamed in 2006
LCS	*Liberalų ir centro sąjunga* Liberal Center Union	Right Liberalism	created in 2003 Fusion of the Center Union (*Lietuvos centro sąjunga*) and the Liberal Union (*Lietuvos liberalų sąjunga*)
LS	*Liberalų Sąjūdis* Liberal Movement	Right Liberalism	created in 2006
LDDP	*Lietuvos demokratinė darbo partija* The Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania	Social democracy	created in 1989 merged with the LSDP in 2001
LKDP	*Lietuvos krikščionių demokratų partija* The Christian Democratic Party of Lithuania	Christian democracy	re-created in 1990 merged with TS/LK in 2008
LLRA	*Lietuvos lenkų rinkimų akcija* The Electoral Action of Poles	Ethnic Party	created in 1994
LRS	*Lietuvos rusų sąjunga* The Lithuanian Union of Russians	Ethnic Party	created in 1995
LSDP	*Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija* The Social Democratic Party of Lithuania	Social democracy	re-created in 1989 merged with the LDDP in 2001
NS/SL	*Naujoji sąjunga/Socialliberaliai* New Union/Social Liberals	Center-left	created in 1998 merged with the DP in 2011
TS/LK(D)	*Tėvynės sąjunga/Lietuvos Konservatoriai* Homeland Union/Conservatives of Lithuania *Tėvynės sąjunga*-Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats	Right Conservatism Christian democracy	created in 1993 merged with the LKDP in 2008 renamed TS/LKD
VNDPS	*Valstiečių ir Naujosios demokratijos partijų sąjunga* The Union of Peasants and New Democratic Parties	Agrarian party Center-left	renamed the Lithuanian Peasant Popular Union in 2006 the Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union in 2012

Source: own table

Table 2: The affiliations of the Lithuanian parties to the European federations and parliamentary groups

Political parties	European parliamentary groups	European federations	International federations
LSDP The Social Democratic Party of Lithuania	PES (2004-2009) and The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats 2009-2013	the Socialist Union of Central-Eastern Europe (S.U.C.E.E.) PES since 1990	Socialist International since 1950
TS/LK Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives	EPP 2004-2009 2009-2013	EPP since 1996	International Democrat Union since 1993
LKDP The Christian Democratic Party of Lithuania	-	The European Union of Christian-democrats Since 1993 Associate member EPP 1998-2008	The International Union of Christian-democrats since 1947
LCS Liberal Center Union	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe 2004-2009	European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party 2000	Liberal International since 1997
LS Liberal Movement	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe 2009-2013	European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party	-
NSS New Union/Social Liberals	-	European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party 2001	Liberal International Observer since 2002
DP Labour Party	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe 2004-2009 2009-2013	European Democratic Party 2004-2012 European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party since May 2012	Alliance of Democrats 2005
TT Order and Justice	Union for Europe of the nations 2004-2009 Europe of Freedom and Democracy 2009-2013	European Free Alliance European Alliance for Freedom since 2010	-

Source: Internet Websites of political parties and European/International federations

1. 2. The "new" parties: in search for an ideological and European identity?

In the 1990s, the Lithuanian political landscape was polarised around two big parties (LDDP, TS/LK) and their satellites (LSDP, LKDP). The parliamentary elections in 2000 and 2004 are considered as "political earthquakes" by Lithuanian political scientists, because they lead to a re-composition of the party system (Jurkynas 2005 : 11-12). The first "political earthquake" was provoked by the entry

of the Liberals (*Lietuvos Liberalų sąjunga*) and the Social Liberals (*Naujoji sąjunga/Socialliberaliai* NS/SL) into the Parliament. These parties adopted a new style and were willing to collaborate over the old political cleavages. The second "political earthquake" was triggered by the electoral successes of a new populist party: the Labour Party (*Darbo Partija* DP), created in October 2003, won the European elections in June 2004 and 39 seats in the parliamentary elections of October 2004. From the mid-2000s, the Lithuanian political landscape is more fragmented and instable. The creations, scissions and fusions of parties are frequent.

The parties created in the first half of the 2000s had more difficulties to define their ideological identity and to find their place in the European arena. The New Union/Social Liberals (NS/SL), created in 1998, could develop quite soon transnational contacts. It became in December 2001 a full member of the Party ELDR and in 2002 an associate member of the Liberal International.[9] However the NS/SL never obtained a seat in the European Parliament and was absorbed by the Labour Party (DP) in June 2011. The Labour Party, created in 2003, chose a liberal identity, although it had defined itself as a center-left party in its program for the European elections of June 2004. Having obtained five seats in the European Parliament, it had considered the possibility to join the socialist group, but finally joined the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe and integrated the small and recently established centrist European Democratic Party (EDP). Following its recent merging with the Social Liberals (NS/SL), the Labour party became in May 2012 a full member of the ELDR, although it was a founding member of the European Democratic Party. This change may confirm the liberal orientation of the Labour Party, but it could also be a political strategy: the Labour Party may have used the fusion with the Social Liberals as an opportunity to leave the tiny and fragile European Democratic Party and to prepare the next European elections.

The Liberal Democratic Party, founded in 2002, could also have integrated the ELDR. After the destitution of the President of the Lithuanian Republic Rolandas Paksas, the party was reorganised for the European elections under a new name, "Order and Justice" (*Tvarka ir Teisingumas* TT). One of its members was elected in the European Parliament and chose to join the Union for Europe of the Nations. The party integrated then the European Free Alliance –Democratic Party of the Peoples of Europe – a party grouping that mainly includes regionalist and ethnic minority parties (Duvold/Jurkynas 2006 : 113). But, "Order and Justice" is not anymore a member of the European Free Alliance. After the dissolution of the group "Union for Europe of the Nations", the party integrated in 2009 the more Eurosceptic group "Europe of Freedom and Democracy". "Order and Justice" is also member of the "European Alliance for Freedom", a pan-European political party of right-wing Eurosceptic MEPs, founded in late 2010. At national level, this Eurosceptic orientation didn't prevent it to sign an agreement of collaboration with the DP and the LDDP for the next legislative elections in October 2012.[10]

Thus, orientations towards European party federations have confirmed the vague ideological identities of the new Lithuanian political parties (Jurkynas 2005: 154 ; Duvold/Jurkynas 2006 : 112-113). After the European elections of 2009, the European orientations of the Lithuanian political

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[9] The Liberal Movement (*Liberalų sąjūdis* LS), created in 2006 by dissidents from the LCS, is the third Lithuanian liberal party to become a full member of the Party ELDR.

[10] The LDDP has left in June 2012 the coalition as a protest against Labour Party's support for the Visaginas nuclear power plant project.

parties remained quite stable. The parties, which obtained seats in the European Parliament (TS/LKD, LDSP, DP), joined the parliamentary group of their European parties. But, nothing is definitely fixed. There are interactions between the national and European levels: party fusions (NS/SL and DP) at the Lithuanian level may have an impact for the European federations, and inversely the re-composition in the European Parliament may influence the ideological identity of Lithuanian parties ("Order and Justice" becoming more Eurosceptic). However, these interactions should not be interpreted as a proof of a deep Europeanisation. First, the socialisation of Lithuanian party leaders is still a going on process. Secondly, it is quite difficult to research on this topic and to measure with precision such a process, because of the lack of concrete elements in the documents and in the interviews.

Table 3: Lithuanian members in the European Parliament (2004-2009)

Names	Lithuanian parties	Parliamentary groups in the EP
Laima Andrikienė	TS/LK	EPP
Vytautas Landsbergis	TS/LK	EPP
Justas Vincas Paleckis	LSDP	ESP
Aloyzas Sakalas	LSDP	ESP
Eugenijus Gentvilas	LCS	ALDE
Margarita Starkevičiūtė	LCS	ALDE
Šarūnas Birutis	DP	ALDE
Danutė Budreikaitė	DP	ALDE
Arūnas Degutis	DP	ALDE
Jolanta Dičkutė	DP	ALDE
Ona Juknevičienė	DP	ALDE
Rolandas Pavilionis	Order and Justice	UEN
Gintaras Didžiokas	VNDPS	UEN

Source : European Parliament's Website

Table 4: Lithuanian members in the European Parliament (2009-2013)

Names	Lithuanian parties	Parliamentarian groups in the EP
Laima Andrikienė	TS/LKD	EPP
Vytautas Landsbergis	TS/LKD	EPP
Radvilė Morkūnaitė	TS/LKD	EPP
Algirdas Saudargas	TS/LKD	EPP
Justas Vincas Paleckis	LSDP	ESP
Zigmantas Balčytis	LSDP	ESP
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė	LSDP	ESP
Rolandas Paksas	Order and Justice	EFD
Juozas Imbrasas	Order and Justice	EFD
Viktor Uspaskich	DP	ALDE
Leonidas Donskis	Liberal Movement	ALDE
Valdemar Tomaševski	Electoral Action of Poles	ECR

Source : European Parliament's Website

2. The EU dimension in the Lithuanian parties' manifestos[11]

The first area of investigation proposed by R. Ladrech is the modifications in parties' manifestos. Their Europeanisation can be measured quantitatively – increased mention of the EU and its policies – and qualitatively – references to the EU as an entity, the integration of the European dimension into references to domestic policy and references to cooperation with transnational organisations such as party federations and European institutions such as the European Parliament (Ladrech 2002 : 396).

2.1. The European dimension: a limited presence in quantitative terms

The space given to the European dimension in the manifestos for the parliamentarian elections of October 1996 is quantitatively limited. This may be not surprising, because Lithuania applied for the EU only in December 1995. Among the twenty four parties present in the parliamentarian competition, nine parties don't directly mention Europe, the West or European/transatlantic organisations such as the EU, the Council of Europe or the NATO. The other fifteen parties mentioned the European/transatlantic dimension, but with unclear terms. Only three small parties (the Lithuanian Women's Party, the Union of the Christian Democrats and the nationalist Coalition *Tautininkai*) mentioned clearly the EU. The two main parties (LDDP, TS/LK) mentioned the Council of Europe. Only one party (the Union of the Christian Democrats) mentioned the NATO. Eight parties use the name of « Europe » or the adjective « European » in order to evoke the European standards or the geographical/historical dimension of Europe (LDDP, LSDP, LCS, LKDP, the League for the Lithuanian Freedom, Electoral Action of Poles, the Alliance of the Lithuanian Ethnic Minorities, the Lithuanian Women's Party). Four parties use the expression "*Vakaras*" (the West) or "*vakarietiškas*" (Western) (LLL, the Lithuanian Union of Russians, the *Tautininkai*, the People's Progress Party). None of the main parties quoted clearly the EU. The right-wing parties (TS/LK, LKDP, LLL, LCS) mentioned only once the European dimension in their manifestos. The left wing parties mentioned it twice (LSDP) or three times (LDDP). The LDDP evoked the signing of the "European treaty" as associate member ("*Europos (asocijuotos narystes) sutartis*"), but without any details.

From 2000, the mention of the European dimension increases clearly in the parties' manifestos. In December 1997 Lithuania was refused to begin the EU accession negotiations with the EU Candidates Countries of the Luxembourg group. This provoked political debates in Lithuania and obliged the Lithuanian elites to commit themselves in favor of the EU integration. Finally, the European Council decided in December 1999 to open the EU accession negotiations with Lithuania. The EU became a salient and common topic. In their programmes prepared for the parliamentarian elections of October 2000, the main Lithuanian parties (LSDP, NS/SL, LCS, LKDP) use precisely the expression "*Europos Sąjunga*" (European Union) or the abbreviation "*ES*" (EU). Only the conservative party Homeland Union (TS/LK) still prefers the word "Europe" instead of "European Union". The right-wing parties refer intensively to the European dimension: the LKDP mentions 14 times the EU and the Conservative Party uses 13 times different expressions referring to Europe. Without surprise, precise references to the EU and its institutions such as the European Parliament are numerous in the manifestos prepared for the European elections of June 2004 (see table 5). But, a few months after the EU accession, this inflation of references to the EU is drastically reduced in the manifestos

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[11] In this paper, I'm dealing only with the short versions of the Parties' manifestos.

written for the parliamentarian elections of October 2004. Moreover reference to the EU almost disappears in the manifestos prepared for the parliamentarian elections of October 2008. Homeland Union/Lithuanian Christian Democrats, the main winners of the elections in 2008, don't even mention the EU or the European dimension. Among the sixteen parties having participated to the elections, six parties don't refer to the European dimension at all, nine parties refer to it between once and four times. Only the Lithuanian Peasant Popular Union mentions clearly six times the EU. Numerous references to the EU and its institutions reappear in the manifestos written for the European elections of June 2009 (see table 5). It seems that a dichotomy has been established in the post-accession period between the national and European elections: from now on the Lithuanian political parties deal with the EU mainly upon the elections for the European Parliament.

The position of the European dimension as a topic in the parties' manifestos has also evolved. In 1996, it was located at the end of the manifestos in the section "national defense" and/or "foreign policy". In 2000, the half of the parties (the nationalist coalition *Tautos frontas*, the Union of the Lithuanian people, LDKP, TS/LK and the social-democratic coalition) puts this topic at the beginning of their manifesto and thus is willing to show the saliency of the EU accession for the future of Lithuania. The other parties (LLS, NS/SL, LCS, the Modern Christian-Democratic Union and the Lithuanian Peasants Party) still mention the EU and the NATO at the end of their manifestos. After the EU accession, most of the parties come back to the "traditional" formula for the parliamentary elections in October 2004: they mention the EU in the section "foreign policy" as a geopolitical actor (VNDS, coalition LSDP and NS/SL, TS/LK, coalition "Order and Justice" and LCS). In 2008, the mention to the EU is most of time associated with one policy: the education (LSDP, NS/SL), the energy issue (LSDP, the Civic Democratic Party), the monetary policy (Liberal Movement, the Lithuanian Center Party), the structural funds (the Civic Democratic Party, DP, Order and Justice) or the foreign policy (NS/SL, DP). However the new location for the EU dimension should not be interpreted as a sign of internalisation, as very few parties deal with it in their manifestos. All in all it seems that the EU is still considered as an external actor, as a foreign policy topic and is not completely internalised as a new environment for domestic policies.

Table 5: The quantitative evolution of the European dimension in the parties' manifestos

LSDP					
Elections	October 2000	June 2004	October 2004	October 2008	June 2009
Number of words	1492	869	1118	399	426
Europos Sąjunga or ES	2	4	4	1	2
Europa	-	18	-	1	16
Europinis	-	1	-	1	-
Europos Parlamentas*	-	1	-	-	1
NATO	1	1	2	-	-
NS/SL					
Number of words	1565	1265	Coalition with the LSDP	362	-
Europos Sąjunga or ES	3	52	-	2	-
Europa	-	8	-	1	-
Europos Parlamentas	-	5	-	-	-
NATO	1	-	-	1	-
LCS*					
Number of words	802	1161	831	406	404
Europos Sąjunga or ES	3	14	6	-	13
Europa	-	1	1	-	3
Europinis	-	1	-	-	-
Europos Parlamentas	-	11	-	-	3
NATO	3	2	1	-	-
LKDP					
Number of words	1583	1224	1273	Fusion TS/LK	Fusion TS/LK
Europos Sąjunga or ES	14	16	6	-	-
Europa	-	21	-	-	-
Europinis/europietis	-	3	-	-	-

Europos Parlamentas	-	8	-	-	-
Vakaras (the West)	-	1	-	-	-
NATO	2	2	-	-	-
TS/LK(D)					
Number of words	1063	1357	1222	376	414
Europos Sąjunga or ES	1	30	6	-	20
Europa	10	27	2	-	8
Europinis/europietiškas/europietis	2	3	2	-	1
Europos Parlamentas/ europarlamentaras	-	8	-	-	4
Vakaras (the West)	4	1	-	-	-
vakarietiškas (Western)	1	-	-	-	-
NATO	2	2	2	-	-
Order and Justice					
Number of words	-	323	1273	342	370
Europos Sąjunga or ES	-	12	10	2	7
Europa	-	6	-	1	4
Europos Parlamentas	-	-	1	-	3
Vakaras (The West)	-	-	1	-	-
NATO	-	-	2	-	-
DP					
Number of words	-	727	665	382	438
Europas Sąjunga or ES	-	23	2	2	17
Europa	-	3	-	-	7
Europinis	-	3	-	-	-
Europos Parlamentas	-	4	1	-	2
NATO	-	-	-	1	-

* For the parliamentarian elections of October 2000, the results are from the manifesto of the Liberal Union of Lithuania (LLS).

Source: own table

One of the reasons for the limited space given to the EU dimension in the parties' manifestos could be the strong consensus in the Lithuanian elite about the foreign and EU accession of Lithuania. According to an expert survey, all the main parties range from moderately to very pro-EU, particularly so in the case of the Liberals and Conservatives. The following graphic (Duvold/Jurkynas 2006) reveals a very weak relationship between position on the EU and left/right placement.
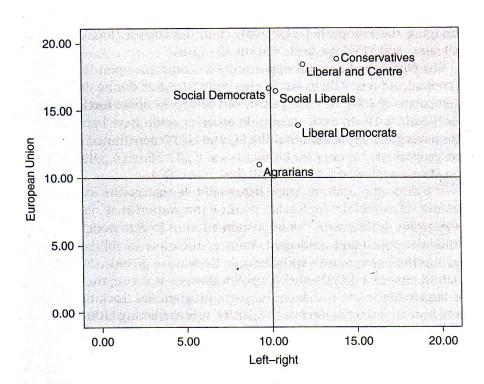
Figure 1: Party location on EU scale and left-right placement

Figure 6.1. Party location on EU scale and left–right placement, based on expert judgements
Source: Results of an expert survey conducted by Kenneth Benoit and Michael Laver (spring 2004).
Note: 18 experts were asked to evaluate party stances. The scale ranges between 1 and 20, where 1 notifies an extreme anti-EU and pro-East/Russia position and 20 means the opposite (pro-EU/anti-East). Calculations made by Jurkynas and Ramonaitė (2005). The Labour Party was not included in the study.

Source: Duvold/Jurkynas 2006: 115

The elite consensus remains unchanged until now and it seems unlikely to change in the future. Prior to the Parliament's elections in October 2004, 13 political parties, including the main parties, signed an agreement on Lithuania's foreign political goals for a four-year period. Similar agreements were signed in 2008 and 2011. Qualitatively, the elite consensus on the European dimension is disclosed by the uniformed vision of the EU presented in the Lithuanian parties' programmes.

2.2 The pre-accession period: Taking into account the EU as a new environment

Generally speaking, the parties' manifestos don't present any clear vision for the European integration and the future of the EU. Even if the terms they employ differ to some extent, they approve Lithuania's EU membership and offer similar views on how the country can take advantage of it (Duvold/Jurkynas 2006 : 114). In the manifestos for the elections of October 1996, the main parties (LDDP, LSDP, LLS, LCS, TS/LK, LKDP) barely mention the European organisations (the EU and the Council of Europe) or the NATO. Small parties are more prolix about the topic, even if most of them uses very vague words (such as international organisations, Western orientation, the West, Europe) and don't directly mention the EU or the NATO. In 1996 three parties wish that Lithuania's membership to the EU (the *Tautininkai* and the Lithuanian Party of Democrats) or international organisations (Lithuanian People's Party) should be confirmed by a popular referendum. The Western/Eastern cleavage, which divides the Lithuanian political landscape since the beginning of the 1990s, is visible in the manifestos. The People's Progress Party wishes to be "not to the East, not to the West, but here, now and always" (*"nei i Rytus, nei i Vakarus, o cia, dabar ir visados"*, *Tautos pazangos partija,* programme Nr. 24, October 1996). The Lithuanian Women's Party promises to find "rational compromises […] between the EU membership and the collaboration with the East" (*Lietuvos moterų partija,* programme Nr. 18, October 1996). The Lithuanian Union of Russians refuses the unilateral orientation of the Lithuanian economy towards the West and wants to maintain the traditional economic links with Russia and the ex-USSR countries (Programme Nr. 4, October 1996). Only one party, the Lithuanian Alliance of National Minorities is against Lithuania's membership to any union or military bloc and defends the "complete neutrality" of Lithuania as a guarantee for the security of the nation (*Lietuvos tautinių mazumų aljansas*, programme Nr. 17, October 1996).

Upon the parliamentary elections of October 2000, (almost) all manifestos[12] mention the European integration, but in a more or less precise way. Except the Lithuanian People's Union (*Lietuvos Liaudies Sąjunga*), all parties are for Lithuania's membership to the EU and the NATO. They justify this position by two main arguments: Lithuania's (geo)political security and economic development. Other arguments are also used in the manifestos, such as the well-being of the Lithuanians (LLS[13], MKDS[14], LCS[15], LKDP[16], TS/LK[17]), the creation of a modern and democratic state (LLS, LKDP, TS/LK), the "Return to Europe" (the Modern Christian-Democratic Union MKDS[18]) and the values of the Christian Occident (TS/LK). Only the social-democratic coalition has a different approach of the European dimension. Its manifesto *"Veikime kartu"* ("Let's Act together") mention directly the Socialist International, its values and the European Social Charta. The programme is built on the

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[12] Only two small parties don't mention directly the EU or the NATO: The Lithuanian Union for Freedom (*Lietuvos Laisvės Sąjunga*) und the Union of the moderate Conservatives (*Nuosaikiųjų Konservatorių Sajunga*).

[13] Programme of the Lithuanian Liberal Union, *"Lietuvos kelias"* ("Lithuania's way"), October 2000.

[14] Programme of the Modern Christian-Democratic Union, *"LAISVAS ŽMOGUS TEISINGOJE VISUOMENĖJE"* ("A free human being in a fair society"), October 2000.

[15] Programme of the Lithuanian Center Union, *"Naujoji politika Lietuvai: atsigręžk į žmogų"* ("A new policy for Lithuania : turn back to the human being"), October 2000.

[16] Programme of the Christian Democratic Party of Lithuania, *"Tarnauti Lietuvai"* (*"Ruling for Lithuania"*), October 2000.

[17] Programme of the Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives, *"Naujas Vejas"* (*"New wind"*), October 2000.

[18] The Modern Christian-Democratic Union (*Moderniųjų krikščionių demokratų sąjunga* MKDS) was founded in 1998 and merged in 2003 with the Lithuanian Liberal Union and the Lithuanian Center Union.

notion of democracy and the membership to international organisations is considered as a part of the "political democracy".

Whereas there is a consensus on Lithuania's EU membership, there are more differences on the negotiations with the EU, particularly on EU accession conditions and rhythm. Some parties (NS/SL[19], LKDP[20], TS/LK, MKDS) are clearly for a rapid integration of Lithuania to the EU and the NATO. The social-democratic coalition doesn't' mention the rhythm of the integration and prefers to establish a priority order, the EU before the NATO:

"Sieksime: […] atkurti balansą tarp trijų lygiaverčių prioritetų: 1) integracijos į Europos Sąjungą; 2) integracijos į NATO 3) gerų santykių su kaimyninėmis valstybėmis palaikymo "

"We will seek to […] create a balance between tree equal priorities: 1) integration to the European Union, 2) integration to the NATO, 3) keeping good relationships with the neighbor states".[21]

This priority order is significant: the Social-democrats were always very careful regarding Lithuania's membership to the NATO, because one part of the Lithuanian public opinion did not want to integrate a military bloc and/or preferred to come back to the neutrality policy of the Lithuanian Republic in the interwar period.[22] Moreover from the point of view of the Social-Democrats, the membership to the EU was more challenging because it was associated with social and economic reforms, whereas the membership to the NATO requested only military reforms.[23] Homeland Union (TS/LK) has the most "Europhile" slogan: *"Ryžtingai –už europietišką Lietuvą"*- "Firmly for a European Lithuania". The programme enhances the saliency of a fast integration to the EU trough a metaphor: a train ticket in the "Europe express".

"Bilietas į Europos ekspresą yra kiekvieno mūsų sėkmės bilietas. Tai vienintelis kelias, galintis užtikrinti sparčią šalies raidą į aukštesnę gyvenimo kokybę, mūsų vaikų gerovę."

"A ticket for the "Europe express" is a ticket for the success for each of us. That's the only way that can guarantee the fast development of the country towards a higher quality of life, the well-being of our children."[24]

According to its manifesto, Homeland Union foresees an accession to the NATO in 2002 and to the EU in 2004-2005, although both organisations were equally important for the Party leaders.[25] The preference for differentiated EU/NATO accessions in the time is strongly defended by the nationalist coalition *Tautos Frontas*: it complains that Lithuania didn't belong to the first wave for the NATO accession in 1998 and inversely is against a hasty integration into the EU:

"Narystė Europos Sąjungoje, tinkamai nepasirengus, paliktų Lietuvą nuolat atsiliekančių, antrarūšių šalių grupėje."

"An EU membership, if it is not properly prepared, would leave Lithuania in a group of second- zone countries that are constantly lagging behind."[26]

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[19] Programme of the New Union/Social Liberals, "*MUMS RŪPI KIEKVIENAS LIETUVOS ŽMOGUS*" ("*We care for each Lithuanian*"), October 2000.
[20] The membership to both organizations was equally important for the Christian-Democrats. The EU membership could not have been a substitute the NATO membership. Interview with A. Saudargas, 2010.11.09
[21] Programme of the Social Democrat coalition, "*Veikime Kartu"* ("Let's Act together"), October 2000.
[22] Interview with P. V. Andriukaitis, 2011.06.14.
[23] Interview with V. J. Paleckis, 2011.03.18.
[24] Programme of TS/LK, *Naujas Vėjas* ("New wind"), October 2000.
[25] Interview with V. Landsbergis, 2011.03.24.
[26] Programme of the National Front (*Tautos Frontas)*, "*Lietuva Pirmiausi*a" ("Lithuania first"), October 2000.

The Lithuanian People's Union also defends a late accession to the EU and criticises the "*EU diktat*" towards Lithuania, but contrary to the coalition *Tautos Frontas*, it rejects firmly the NATO membership.[27] Most of Lithuanian parties wish to obtain the best accession conditions and to defend the Lithuanian interests (NS/SL, LCS, LKDP, MKDS, and the Lithuanian Peasants' Party). Only three parties demand a referendum on the EU accession: two Eurosceptic parties (the Lithuanian People's Union and the Lithuanian Peasants' Party) and the Europhile New Union/Social Liberals (NS/SL).

The parties' manifestos prepared for the European elections of June 2004 and the Parliament's election of October 2004 are much more Europeanised: they take into consideration the EU as a new actor and environment for the domestic level. Nevertheless the European elections was considered as second order elections in comparison with the presidential elections organised at the same time and were used as a general repetition for the parliamentary elections in October 2004 (Jurkynas 2005 : 159 ; Duvold/Jurkynas 2006 : 121). From 2004 the Lithuanian parties refer to the EU as a standard to be reached in different areas: to improve the economic productivity at the European level (TS/LK October 2004[28]; DP June 2004[29]), to reduce the unemployment rate at the European level (coalition LSDP and NS/SL October 2004[30]), to obtain « European » pensions (Lithuanian Union for Freedom October 2004[31]), to increase the income level (VNDPS October 2004[32]; coalition "Order and Justice" October 2004[33]). The use of the structural funds is omnipresent in 2004. Most of parties ask for a better structural funds' management (VNDPS June and October 2004; DP June and October 2004) or for a more transparent management (LKDP June 2004; TS/LK June 2004[34]). Some parties are against EU budget's reduction (DP June 2004; LKDP June 2004) or ask for an EU budget favorable to Lithuania (VNDS June 2004; coalition "Order and Justice" June 2004). Several parties mention the two sensitive topics in the negotiations for Lithuania's EU accession: the decommissioning of the Ignalina nuclear power plant[35] and the issue of transit to/from Kaliningrad.[36] Regarding the fate of

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[27] Programme of the Lithuanian Union for Freedom, "*UŽ TEISINGĄ LIETUVĄ*" ("For a fair Lithuania"), October 2000.

[28] Programme of the Homeland Union (TS/ LK), "*Į SĖKMĖS LIETUVĄ*" ("Towards a successful Lithuania"), October 2004.

[29] Programme of the Labour Party (DP), "*DIRBSIME JŪSŲ GEROVEI*" ("We will work for your welfare"), June 2004.

[30] Programme of the coalition LSDP and NS/SL, "*UŽ DARBĄ LIETUVAI*" ("For the work for Lithuania"), October 2004.

[31] Programme of the Lithuanian Union for Freedom, "*ATKURSIME LIETUVOJE TEISINGUMĄ*"("We'll restore the justice in Lithuania"), October 2004.

[32] Programme of the Peasants' and New Democratic Union (VNDS), "*TEISINGUMAS IR GEROVĖ VISIEMS*" ("Justice and wellfare for all"), October 2004.

[33] Coalition "Order and Justice", October 2004.

[34] Programme of Homeland Union (TS/LK), *Tėvynės sąjunga – tai išgirstas Lietuvos balsas Europoje!* ("Homeland Union – that's Lithuania's voice heard in Europe), June 2004.

[35] As a condition of entry into the EU, Lithuania had to agree in 1999 to close existing units of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant, because of the plant's similarities to the failed Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant. Closure of the plant faced strong opposition from the Lithuanian people. The EU agreed to pay decommissioning costs and compensations, with payments continuing until 2013.

[36] The issue of transit to/from Kaliningrad actively raised by Russia from 1999 onwards was a problem specific to Lithuania's accession negotiations. At the beginning of the discussions Russia claimed right to passageways through Lithuania, Poland and Latvia. However, the issue was being discussed only in Lithuania's accession negotiations. A certain tension was felt in Lithuania for the fear of a „political decision" by the EU, when Russia would get considerable concessions and Lithuania's chances of joining the Schengen Area would be diminished.

the Ignalina nuclear power plant, some parties (VNDS October 2004; the Social Union of the Christian Conservatives October 2004[37]) promise to obtain a prolongation for the second reactor, although during the EU accession negotiations Lithuanian authorities committed themselves for its closure. Other parties mention the necessity to build new reactors funded by the EU (coalition "Order and Justice" October 2004) and/or to increase Lithuania's independence by developing trans-European projects (TS/LK June and October 2004; LKDP October 2004), such as an electric bridge and a pipeline towards Western Europe (coalition "Order and Justice" October 2004; the Social Union of the Christian Conservatives October 2004). The second challenging EU negotiation's issue – Kaliningrad - is also mentioned: it is suggested to demilitarise the region and to involve it in EU projects (TS/LK October 2004; DP June 2004; LCS June 2004). The Lithuanian Social Democratic Party and the New Union/Social Liberals, which formed the ruling coalition during the EU negotiations, almost don't mention the most difficult chapters of the EU accession negotiations: they commit themselves to guarantee new energy supply, in order to compensate the closure of the Ignalina nuclear power plant.[38]

Lithuanian parties present a clear and consensual vision of Lithuania's position in Europe. For Homeland Union, the EU Accession should be an opportunity to reinforce Lithuania and Lithuanian patriotism:

 "Mums svarbu, kad būdami europiečiai, taptume stipresni lietuviais. Europoje atsiveria erdvė įgyvendinti naują nacionalinę idėją – Sėkmės Lietuvos idėją*. Privalome turėti dideles tautines ambicijas – nebūti Europos atsilikėliais, siekti būti sparčiausiai Europos lygį besivejančia naująja Europos šalimi. Tada vėl tapsime orūs ir besididžiuojantys savo Tėvyne."*

"It's important for us that, while being Europeans, we become stronger in being Lithuanians. Europe opens a space to implement a new national idea, the idea of Lithuania of the Success. We have to have strong national ambitions: not to be Europe's stragglers and try to become the fastest of the new European countries in catching up the European level. So then we'll once again regain the self-respect and the proud of our Fatherland".[39]

The main parties consider Lithuania as a "bridge" (DP October 2004), an "arbitrator" between the East and the West (TS/LK June 2004) or as a "regional gravity center" (coalition LSDP and NS/SL October 2004). Thus, Lithuania has to promote democracy in the Eastern neighbor countries (coalition LSDP and NS/SL October 2004) and to commit itself for their accession to the EU (TS/LK October 2004) and/or their participation to European projects (coalition "Order and Justice" October 2004). Lithuanian parties don't submit any clear vision on the EU integration and its future. Although the LSDP is in favor of a federal Europe, this idea is not mentioned in any manifestos. The center and right-wing parties defend the Europe of nations, deeply anchored in Christian values (Electoral Action of Poles June 2004; the Union of Peasants and New Democratic Parties June 2004; LKDP June 2004;

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[37] Programme of the Social Union of Christian Conservatives, "RINKIS SAVĄ VALDŽIĄ"("Choose your own government", October 2004.

[38] According to A. Valionis, former Foreign Affairs Minister (NS/SL), it was clear since the very beginning of the EU Accession negotiations that the leeway of the Lithuanian authorities to negotiate a prolongation of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant was very thin. Interview with A. Valionis, 2011.03.10.

[39] Programme of Homeland Union, *Tėvynės sąjunga – tai išgirstas Lietuvos balsas Europoje!"* ("Homeland Union – that's Lithuania's voice heard in Europe"), June 2004.

TS/LK June 2004). Only one nationalist party (*Lietuvių Tautininkų Sajunga,* October 2004)[40] is clearly against a federal Europe. Most of parties ask for the respect of the States' independence and the decentralisation of the decision-making process at the national level (National Center Party June 2004[41]; TS/LK June 2004). Two parties want to give more powers to regional and local authorities (The Union of Peasants and New Democratic Parties June 2004; the Liberal Democratic Party June 2004[42]). Regarding the foreign policy of the EU, the Lithuanian parties merely propose - without any explanation – more complementarity, more collaboration between the EU, the NATO (LCS June 2004; LKDP June 2004) and the United Nations (LSDP June 2004). Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives (TS/LK) wishes provocatively that there will be more America and less Russia in Europe (TS/LK June and October 2004). The other parties avoid mentioning the relationships between the EU and Russia.

There is a progressive Europeanisation of the Lithuanian parties' programmes in the pre-accession period, but the process remains quite superficial. Lithuanian political parties react step by step to the new environment offered by the European integration. Nevertheless they don't anticipate or propose long-term strategies for the EU. Regarding the post-accession period, two scenarios are possible for the Europeanisation of Lithuanian party system. In the most negative scenario, Lithuanian parties could become less Europeanised and ignore the EU-dimension. In the most positive scenario, Lithuanian parties, directly involved in the EU Parliament, could progressively become multi-level actors and EU-policy initiators.

2.3. The post-accession period: a regression for the EU dimension?

Four years after the EU accession, the Lithuanian parties' manifestos begin to diffuse a negative image of the EU. Several parties (the National Resurrection Party, the Civic Democratic Party, the Liberal Movement, and the Social Union of the Christian Conservatives) commit themselves to fight against EU bureaucrats and centralisation (the Civic Democratic Party June 2009) and/or to reform EU institutions (Liberal Movement October 2008; the Social Union of the Christian Conservatives October 2008). In the very beginning of its manifesto for the European elections, the National Resurrection Party *(Tautos Prisikėlimo Partija)[43]* perfectly sums up the mentioned criticisms:

"Europos Parlamente (EP) mes sieksime kurti atvirą ES, kuri atitiktų gyvybinius Lietuvos interesus ir nepretenduotų tapti griežtai centralizuota supervalstybe. […] EP turi tapti demokratijos tvirtove, o ne savanaudiškų politinių, biurokratinių ir lobistinių žaidimų arena."

"In the European Parliament (EP), we will seek to create an open EU, which will be conforming to the vital Lithuanian interests and won't try to become a strong centralised Super-state. […] The EP has to become a

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[40] Programme of the Lithuanian Nationalist Union (*Lietuvių Tautininkų Sajunga)*, "*RENKUOSI LIETUVĄ"* ("I'm choosing Lithuania"), October 2004.
[41] Programme of the National Center Party (*Nacionalinės Centro partija* NCP), "*Euro realistai už nacionalinius interesus"*("Euro-realists for national interests"), June 2004.
[42] Programme of the Liberal Democratic Party, "*LIETUVA VISADA BUVO EUROPOS VALSTYBĖ"* ("Lithuania has always been a European state"), June 2004.
[43] The National Resurrection Party (*Tautos Prisikėlimo Partija*) merged in September 2011 with Homeland Union/Lithuanian Christian Democrats.

fortress of democracy, and not an arena for selfish political, bureaucratic and lobbyist games" *(Tautos Prisikėlimo Partija, "EUROPĄ LIETUVAI!"* ("Europe for Lithuania", June 2009)

Some small parties refer in a negative[44] or more neutral[45] way to "Brussels", what can be considered as an appropriation of the Eurosceptic rhetoric. No party proposes a new vision for the EU future. Two parties clearly reject the project for a federal Europe (Lithuanian Peasant Popular Union June 2009) or the "United States of Europe" (Liberal Movement June 2009). Most of the parties focus on the necessity to defend Lithuanian national interests in the EU institutions. The parties' slogans for the European elections systematically juxtapose the words *"Lietuva"* and *"Europa"/"Europos Sąjunga"*: *"EUROPĄ LIETUVAI!"*[46] (National Resurrection Party), *"Už kitokią Lietuvą - kitokioje Europoje!"*[47] (*Fronto partija*), *"UŽ STIPRIĄ LIETUVĄ EUROPOS SĄJUNGOJE!"*[48] (Order and Justice), **"SVARBIAUSIA- ŽMOGUS/ Nauja kryptis Europai ir Lietuvai"**[49] *(LSDP), "Už tvirtą Lietuvą Europos Sąjungoje"***[50]** (Social Union of the Christian Conservatives), *"GEROVĖS LIETUVAI EUROPOJE SVARBIAUSIAS YRA TAVO BALSAS!"* [51] (Labour Party).

Lithuanian political parties have a pragmatic or motivated by self-interest vision of the EU and the European policies. Before the accession, a better management of the EU structural funds was mentioned in parties' manifestos. After the accession, political parties ask for a better redistribution: European solidarity should be reinforced, in order that the less developed and peripheral regions and countries benefit more from the EU structural funds (National Resurrection Party June 2009; Homeland Union June 2009[52]; Lithuanian Peasants Popular Union June 2009). Lithuanian parties don't commit themselves for new European policies, except for the energy. The Liberal Movement is in favor of a free-trade European Union and wants to limit the creation of new European policies.[53] The National Resurrection Party is for more economical concurrence and against any fiscal harmonisation (National Resurrection Party June 2009). Very few parties deal with the monetary EU policy, although Lithuania was refused in 2008 to enter into the Euro-zone. Only one party is clearly against Lithuania's accession into the Euro-zone (Lithuanian Center Party October 2008). The Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP), the Labour Party (DP), the Liberal and Center Union (LCS) and the Social Union of the Christian Conservatives are in favor of the Euro. However the Liberal Center Union and the Social Union of the Christian Conservatives ask for relaxing the accession conditions into the Euro-zone. Actually the silence of political parties about the monetary policy reflects the relief of the Lithuanian public opinion after the European Commission refused Lithuania's entry into the Euro-zone. According to the Eurobarometers, the Lithuanian population

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[44] Young Lithuania (*Jaunoji Lietuva),* October 2008.

[45] *"Fronto"* Partija June 2009 ; Electoral Action of Poles (LLRA) June 2009.

[46] "Europe for Lithuania"

[47] "For a different Lithuania in a different Europe"

[48] "For a strong Lithuania in the European Union"

[49] "The most important – the human being. A new direction for Europe and Lithuania"

[50] The Social Union of the Christian Conservatives (*Krikščionių konservatorių socialinė sąjunga*), "For a strong Lithuania in the European Union", June 2009.

[51] "For a welfare Lithuania in Europe, the most important, it's your voice"

[52] Programme of Homeland Union (TS/LK), "UŽ SAUGIĄ ATEITĮ EUROPOJE" ("For a secure future in Europe"), June 2009).

[53] Programme of the Liberal Movement, June 2009: "*LRLS pritaria bendros ES politikos kūrimui tik tokiu atveju, jei bendra ES veikla yra efektyvesnė nei pavienių šalių pastangos*." "The Liberal Movement is for the creation of a common EU policy only in the case, where the common EU action is more efficient than the efforts of individual countries."

feared that the introduction of the Euro would provoke growing inflation and frauds (Eurobarometer 64, National Report, Executive Summary, Lithuania: 3; Eurobarometer 66, National Report, Executive Summary, Lithuania: 2).

Lithuania's energetic dependence is an omnipresent topic in the parties' manifestos. Whatever the parties, the main goal is to reduce Lithuania's energetic dependence towards Russia and to diminish energy price for the Lithuanian consumers. Only the means differ from a party to another. Some parties still mention the possibility not to respect the commitments made by Lithuania during the EU accession negotiations and ask for a prolongation of Ignalina nuclear power plant's last reactor (Civic Democratic Party October 2008; Lithuania's Peasants Popular Union October 2008; *Fronto Partija* June 2009; Order and Justice June 2009; Electoral Actions of Poles June 2009; Social Union of Christian Conservatives June 2009). The main parties try to Europeanise the energy topic, by asking for an EU common energy policy (DP June 2009; Liberal and Center Union June 2009; Homeland Union June 2009; Lithuanian Social Democratic Party June 2009; Liberal Movement October 2008). Depending on the parties, this common policy has to be based on one or several pillars: new energy resources (LSDP June 2009; DP June 2009), energy networks with West and North European countries (LSDP June 2009; Social Union of Christian Conservatives June 2009; Liberal and Center Union June 2009), a coordinated position of the EU states towards Russia (Homeland Union June 2009), the liberalisation of electricity and gas' markets (Homeland Union June 2009; DP June 2009; Liberal and Center Union June 2009).

Lithuanian political parties' programmes didn't become more Europeanised in the post-accession period. In some aspects, there was even a regression of the EU dimension. Quantitatively the EU is almost missing in the manifestos written for the Parliament's elections of October 2008. Qualitatively there is still no new idea for the EU future. Some parties use more Eurosceptic jargon. Lithuanian political parties want to commit themselves only for a common EU energy policy. Several reasons can explain the limited Europeanisation of the parties' manifestos. In Lithuania the major foreign policy initiatives remain highly elitist in nature, originating in the Foreign Ministry and Presidential Office (Jurkynas 2005: 158). Political parties don't act as vehicles for foreign political innovation. They are lacking expertise to deal with these topics. Some of the more established parties, such as Homeland Union/Lithuanian Christian Democrats or the Lithuanian Social Democratic Parties, have internal structures for debating foreign political issues. However their function is limited to the design of the party programmes (Duvold/Jurkynas 2006: 116). Another reason for the lack of tangibility of EU policies in the parties' programmes could be the small size of the Lithuanian State. Even if Lithuanian parties had a clear and strong position on EU policies, it would be difficult for them to be heard in the European arena and to have an impact on the EU decision-making process. Moreover the transfer of the *Acquis communautaire* into the national legislation has left the habit to transfer rather than to initiate EU policies. Only two small Lithuanian parties – Lithuania's Center Party and the Liberal Movement – mention Lithuania's Presidency of the EU Council in the second half of 2013. The Liberal Movement, whose manifesto's slogan is "Lithuanians can also lead, and not just follow" ("*Lietuviai gali ne tik sekti, bet vesti")*, wants Lithuania to be more involved in the EU governance and to become a leader in the Baltic Sea Region (Liberal Movement June 2009).

Conclusion

Until today the Europeanisation of the Lithuanian party system remains limited in both areas of investigation proposed by Ladrech (2002). Regarding the relationships with the European parties, only the "traditional" Lithuanian parties, established in the 1990s, have developed deep and stable contacts with their European counterparts. The Lithuanian Social Democratic Party is without any doubts the most Europeanised party in its organisation and its ideology. The political parties founded in the beginning of the 2000s have waited until Lithuania's EU accession to take position in the European arena. The fluidity and instability of the Lithuanian party system may have an impact at the EU level, as the new recent affiliation of the Labour Party (DP) to the ELDR proves it. The analysis of the parties' programmes' content reveals that from 2000 most of Lithuanian parties take into consideration the EU as a new environment. The EU dimension has not a big impact on the competition structure between the parties, mainly because of the strong elite consensus on the EU in Lithuania. The programmes of the Lithuanian parties present a uniform and consensual vision of the European integration and Lithuania's position in the EU. Lithuanian political parties didn't become more Europeanised in the post-accession period. After 2004, the EU almost disappears from the manifestos prepared for national elections. Lithuanian parties mainly focus on the defense of national interests and seek to Europeanise the energy issue, in order to break Lithuania's energy dependence towards Russia. Moreover, several parties diffuse a negative image of the EU and use the Eurosceptic jargon by criticising the so-called "centralised" and "bureaucratic" EU institutions. In its typology, Erol Külahci identified tree patterns of opposition/co-operation in party system represented in the EU: the Europhile party systems, the divided party system and the party system with significant Eurosceptic parties. Following the emergence of the nationalist and Eurosceptic party "Order and Justice", the Lithuanian party system belongs from 2004 to the pattern of party systems with significant Eurosceptic parties (Külahci 2012: 183-190).[54] Before the EU accession, it could have been classified as a Europhile party system.[55]

The superficial Europeanisation of the Lithuanian party system is not an isolated phenomenon in Central and Eastern Europe, and even in West Europe. It is certainly caused by domestic factors, such as the permanent new parties' fusions, scissions and/or creations. But it may also be a consequence of the incomplete building process of the European party system. According to Peter Mair, there is indeed "no European party system as such", but rather "a collection of proto-Europarties" (Mair 2000: 38). In the absence of a European party system, the parties at the European level derive their primary identity and terms of references from their national environment. That's why, the scope for spillover from the European to the national political arena is limited (Mair 2000: 41). The Europeanisation of political parties is a long and uncertain process at national and European level. Regarding the Lithuanian case, Lithuania's Presidency of the EU Council in 2013 could have a

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[54] In the parliamentary elections of October 2004, Order and Justice obtained 10 seats and 11.3% of the votes. The Union of Farmers' Party and New Democracy Party obtained 10 seats and 6.6% of the votes. In the parliamentary elections of October 2008, Order and Justice obtained 15 seats and 12.68% of the votes. The Union of Lithuanian Peasants and Peoples obtained 3 seats and 3.73% of the votes.

[55] In the parliamentary elections of October 2000, the Lithuanian Peasants' Party obtained 4% of the votes. The other Eurosceptic parties (the Lithuanian People's Union, the Lithuanian Liberty Union, the Lithuanian Nationalist Union and the Union of "Young Lithuania", New Nationalists and Political Prisoners) obtained less than 5 % of the votes.

positive impact on the political parties. It may enable them to adapt to the EU dimension as a whole, and not only to specific topics such as the energy issue and the Eastern neighborhood policy. But this is not very likely, whereas Lithuanian political parties, represented in the *Seimas*, have signed in October 2011 an agreement on Lithuania's EU Presidency and don't seem very involved in its preparation. The logistical and political organisation of this event is mainly assumed by the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the EU affairs committee of the *Seimas*.

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