



The European Parliament's proposal for transnational lists

Understanding its shortcomings and limitations

For more: eudemocracy.eu/ranked-apportionment-method-council-report

European Parliament Proposal ^(1/2)

- **Single constituency:** all votes cast on the “second vote” are tallied at EU level.
- **Party proportionality:** seats are attributed to lists in proportion to the votes they receive.
- **Straight distribution:** candidates are elected in the order on which they stand on their respective lists.
- **Avoiding over-representation:** Member States are split in three groups and the order of the list must alternate not just nationalities but also groups in “sections of three slots”.

Note: this document summarises the Parliament’s proposal and links are provided to our main report () , including a full drafting of the proposed amendments.

European Parliament Proposal (2/2)

Group A (5 Member States)			Group B (10 Member States)			Group C (12 Member States)		
1	Germany	83.166.711	6	Romania	19.328.838	16	Denmark	5.822.763
2	France	67.320.216	7	Netherlands	17.407.585	17	Finland	5.525.292
3	Italy	59.641.488	8	Belgium	11.522.440	18	Slovakia	5.457.873
4	Spain	47.332.614	9	Greece	10.718.565	19	Ireland	4.964.440
5	Poland	37.958.138	10	Czech Republic	10.693.939	20	Croatia	4.058.165
			11	Sweden	10.327.589	21	Lithuania	2.794.090
			12	Portugal	10.295.909	22	Slovenia	2.095.861
			13	Hungary	9.769.526	23	Latvia	1.907.675
			14	Austria	8.901.064	24	Estonia	1.328.976
			15	Bulgaria	6.951.482	25	Cyprus	888.005
						26	Luxembourg	626.108
						27	Malta	514.564

Sections	Slot number	Candidate from
Section 1	1	A1
	2	B7
	3	C7
	4	B10
Section 2	5	C5
	6	A3
Section 3	7	A2
	8	C3
	9	B7
Section 4	10	B5
	11	C3
	12	A4
Section 5	13	A5
	14	C12
Section 6	15	B9
	16	A4
	17	A2
	18	B2
Section 7	19	B3
	20	A1
	21	B8
Section 8	22	C1
	23	C2
	24	B4
Section 9	25	A5
	26	C8
Section 10	27	B1
	28	B7

Group structure adopted by the European Parliament (left) and example of list ordering compatible with the group structure (right).

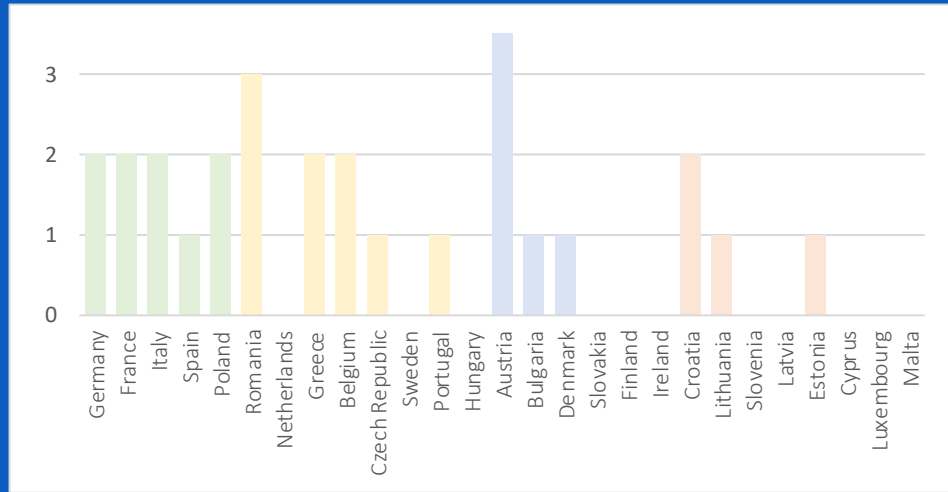
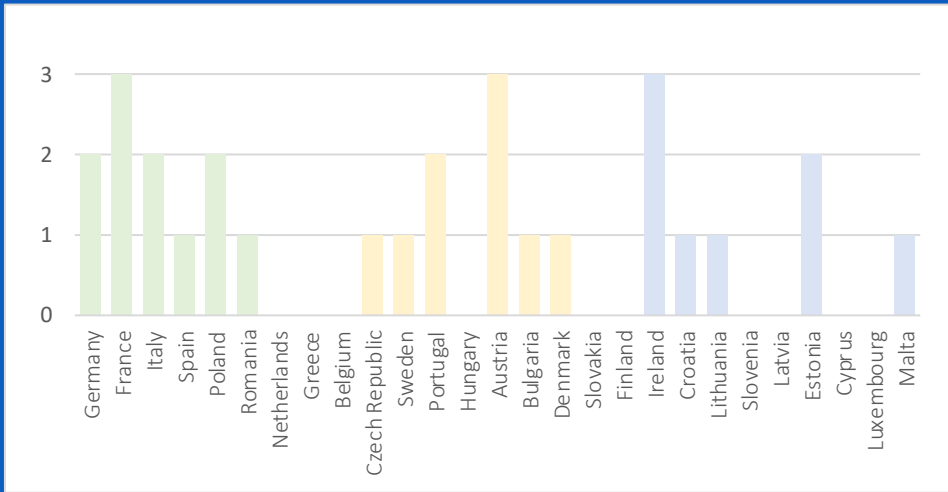
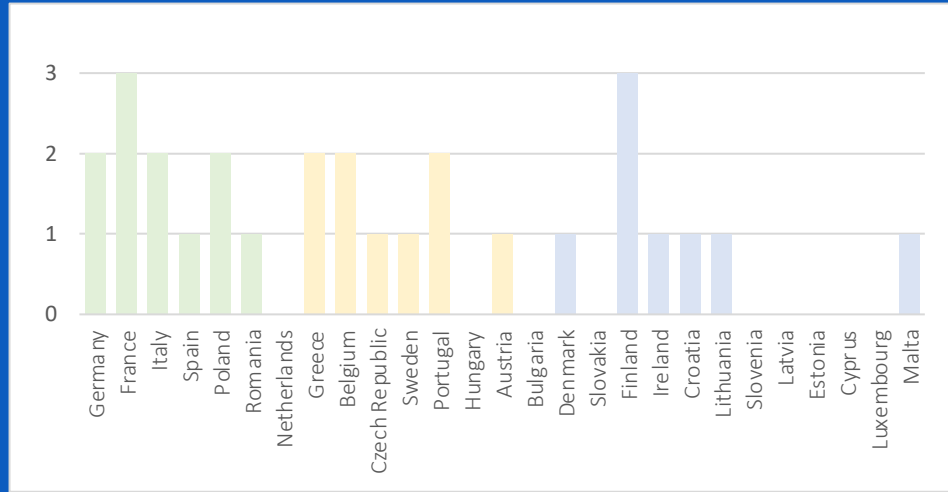
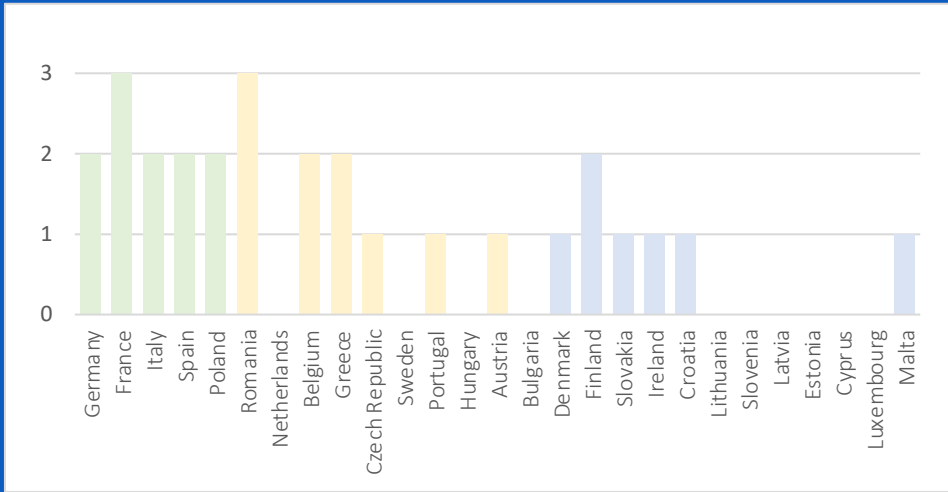
Shortcomings and limitations

- **Volatility:** seat attribution on each list is greatly affected by the number and design of groups, and not solely by lists' electoral performance or Member States' demography.
- **Structural discrimination:** the group system structurally favours the largest countries of each group.
- **Over-representation:** the proposal does not adequately prevent over-representation of certain nationalities.
- **Limited respect for lists/parties' preferences:** the extensive re-ordering process fails to respect lists/parties' preferences in the election of their candidates.

These issues are presented in more details in the next slides.

Volatility

- A consistent apportionment system is characterised by limited volatility: a change in a limited number of the system's characteristics only has a limited impact on the outcome of the apportionment.
- In the case of the EP's proposal, the group structure and the re-ordering that it triggers are heavily affected by the number and design of the groups.
- As a result, the attribution of seats is greatly impacted by extrinsic and arbitrary factors, and not solely by intrinsic factors, such as parties/lists' own electoral performance or Member States' population.



From top to bottom and left to right:

1. EP Proposal
2. Sight variation with larger first group
3. 3 groups of 9 Member States
4. Example with 4 groups

Despite reflecting the same electoral results, the numbers of elected citizens from each Member State vary wildly in each scenario, depending on the structure and number of groups.

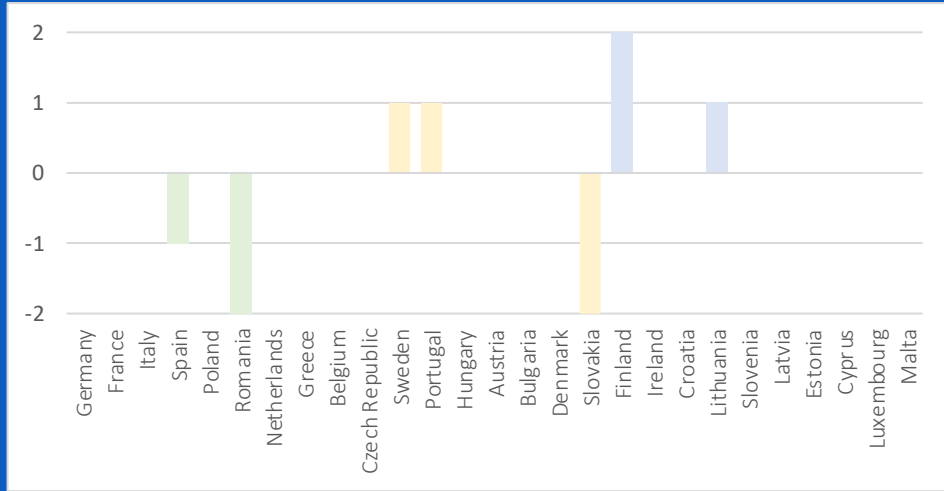
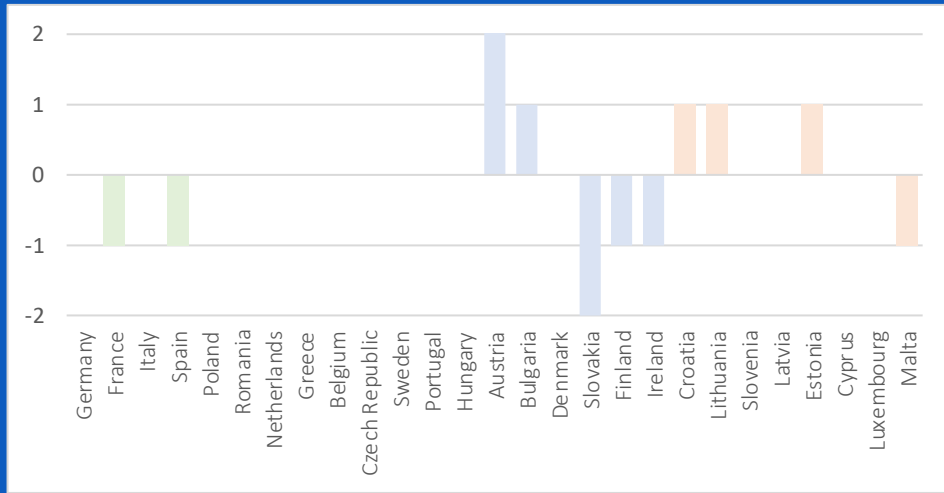
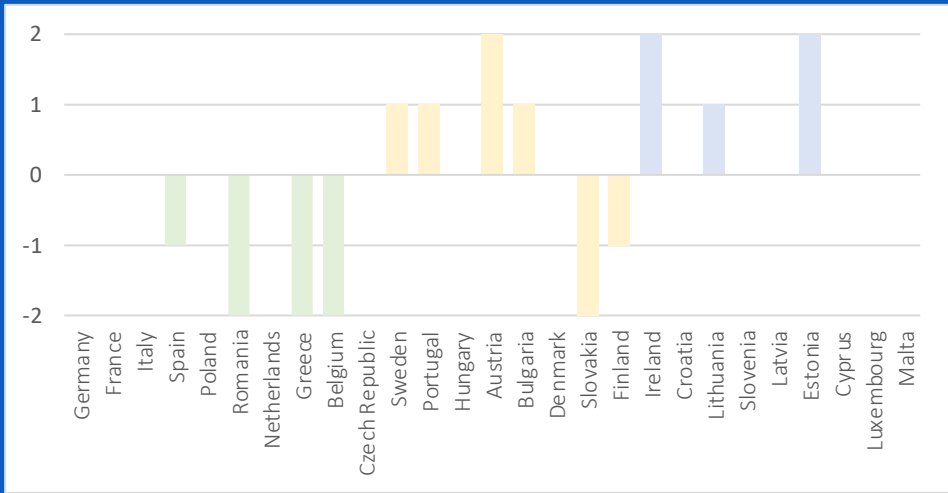
Volatility

Structural discrimination

Over-representation

Respect for preferences





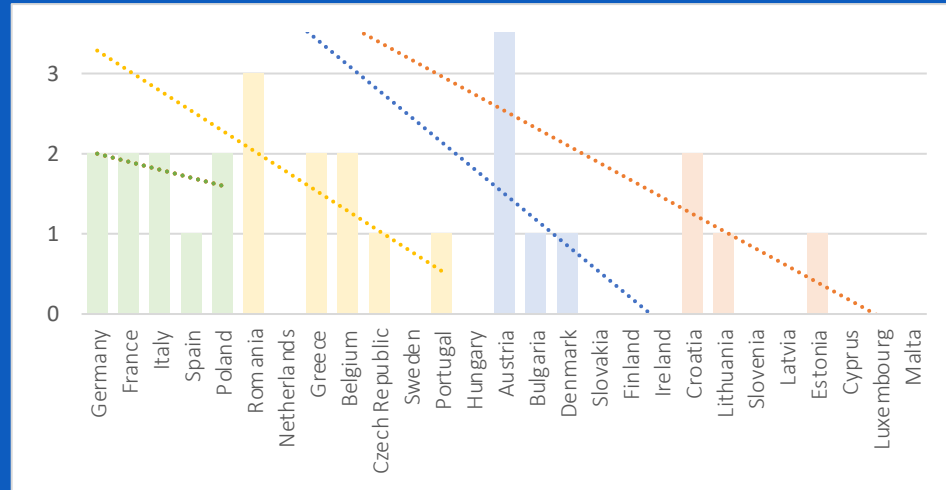
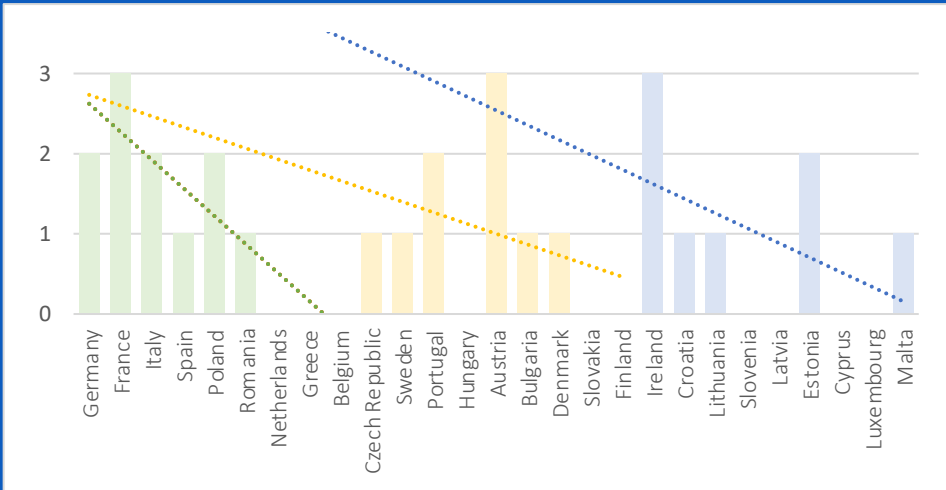
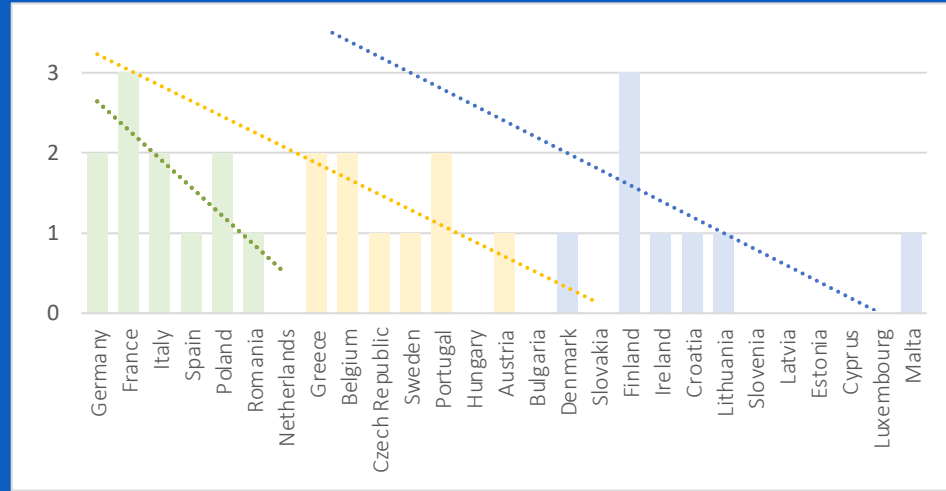
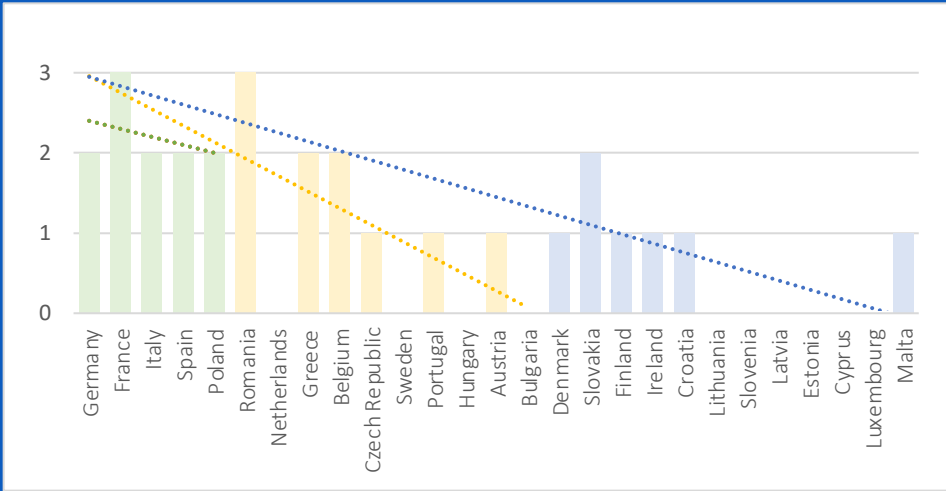
From top to bottom and left to right:

1. EP Proposal (not shown)
2. Slight variation with larger first group
3. 3 groups of 9 Member States
4. Example with 4 groups

These graphs show the variation in number of elected citizens from each Member State compared to the EP's proposal. While results are random, we note that the EP's proposal seems to favour larger States, who always lose out in alternative proposals.

Structural discrimination

- By design, the group system ensures that citizens from Member States of different sizes find themselves in eligible positions. In doing so, it is likely to limit the over-representation of the largest Member States and to increase the representation of smaller States.
- However, by mechanically “moving up the list” smaller Member States according to their groups, the system gives a clear premium to countries near the top of their group: despite being smaller than Member States near the end of the previous group, they will move further up the list.
- The group system therefore structurally favours the largest countries of each group and consistently discriminates against Member States near the bottom of their group, who are systematically bypassed by smaller Member States.



From top to bottom and left to right:

1. EP Proposal
2. Sight variation with larger first group
3. 3 groups of 9 Member States
4. Example with 4 groups

Instead of allowing more representation for larger States, in line with their demography, group systems provide an unfair advantage to countries finding themselves near the top of their group. This applies to all group systems.

Volatility

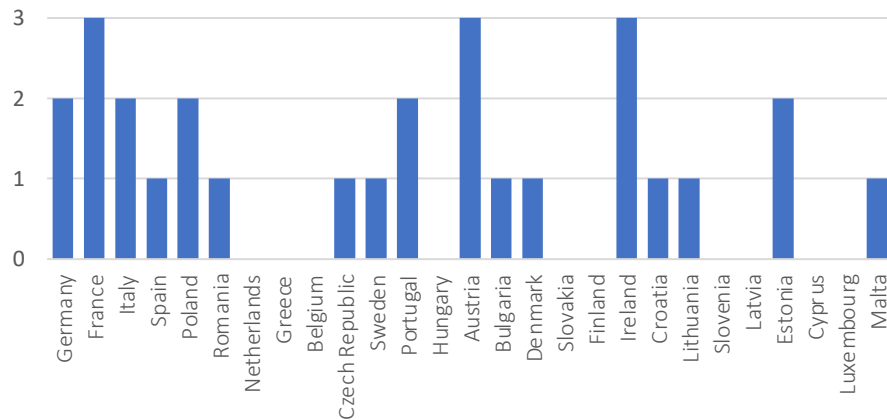
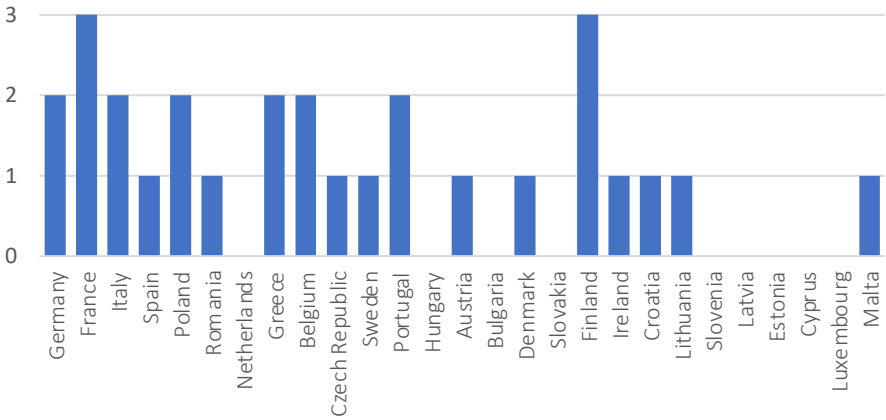
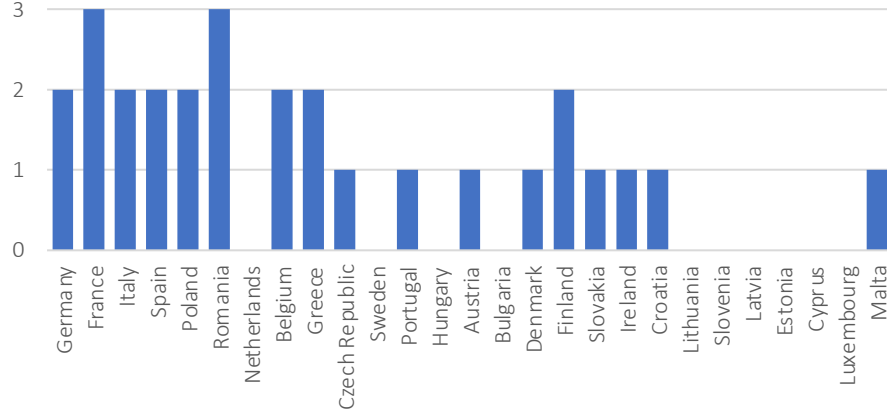
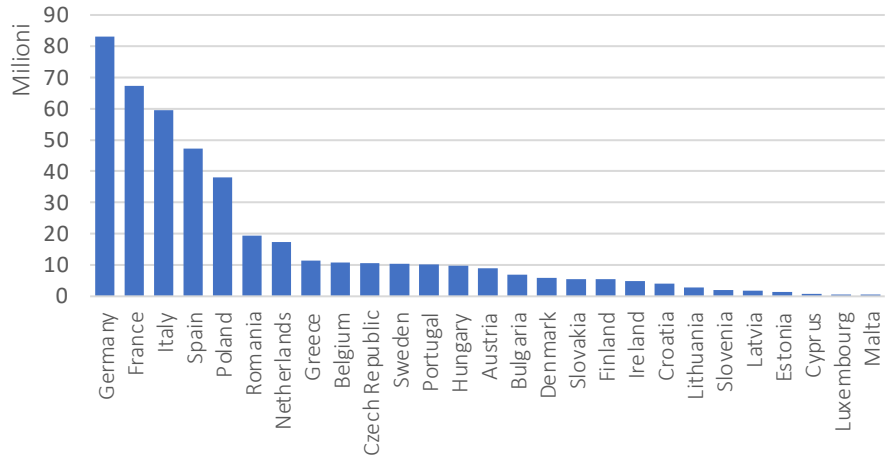
Structural discrimination

Over-representation

Respect for preferences

Over-representation

- The EP's proposal seeks to prevent over-representation via two methods: the group system and a maximum number of six elected citizens per State.
- The maximum number is useful in theory to avoid extreme scenarios but, in practice, the limit is never reached and is unlikely to be.
- More importantly, this understanding of over-representation is flawed: representation must account for those who are represented, meaning Member States' representation must take into account — and align with — their demography: X citizens elected from Germany or Malta is not the same.
- So while the EP's proposal does mitigate limited excesses, it does not address the over-representation of all but the largest Member States, affecting EU citizens' fair representation in Parliament.



From top to bottom and left to right:

1. EU demography
2. EP Proposal
3. Sight variation with larger first group
4. 3 groups of 9 Member States

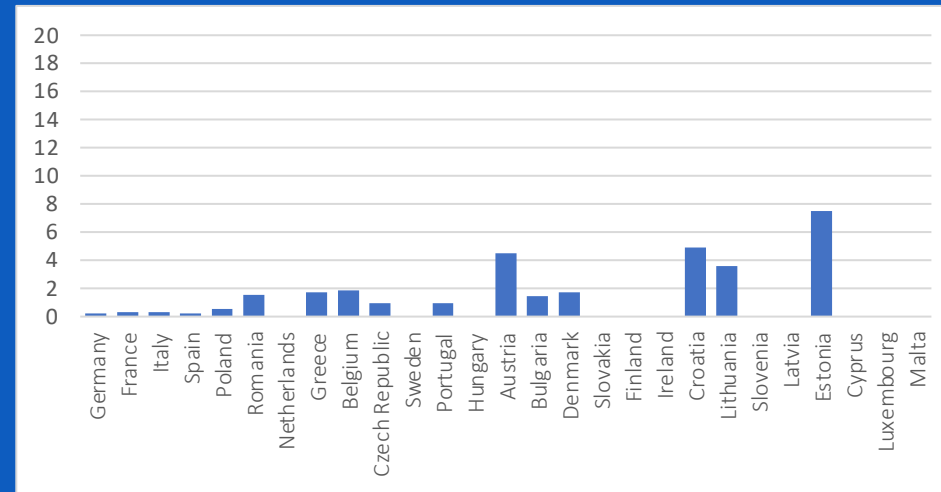
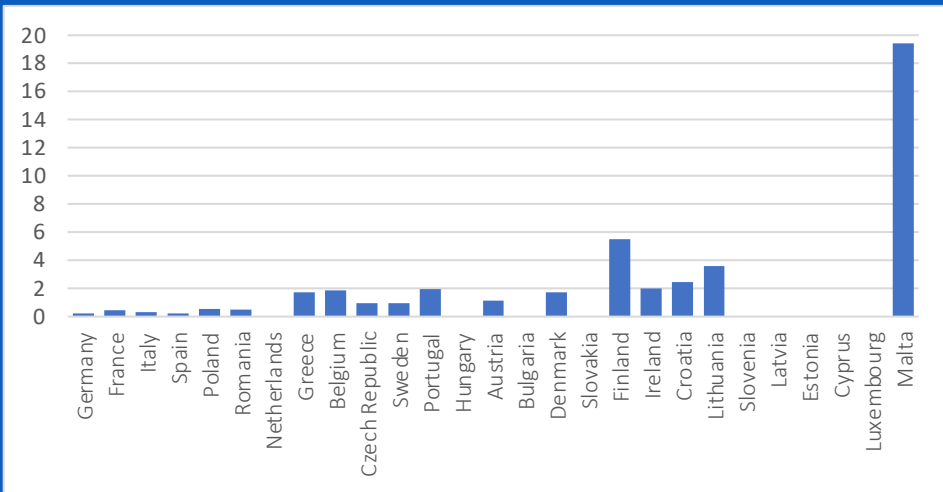
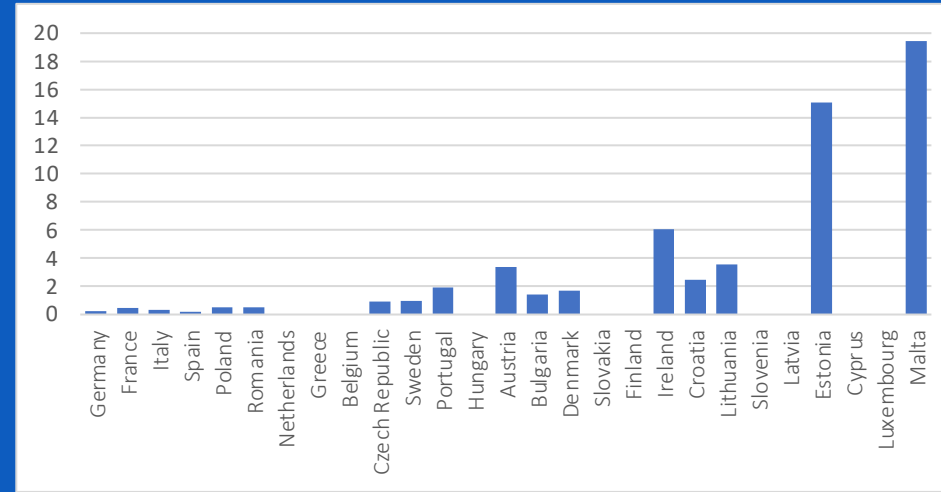
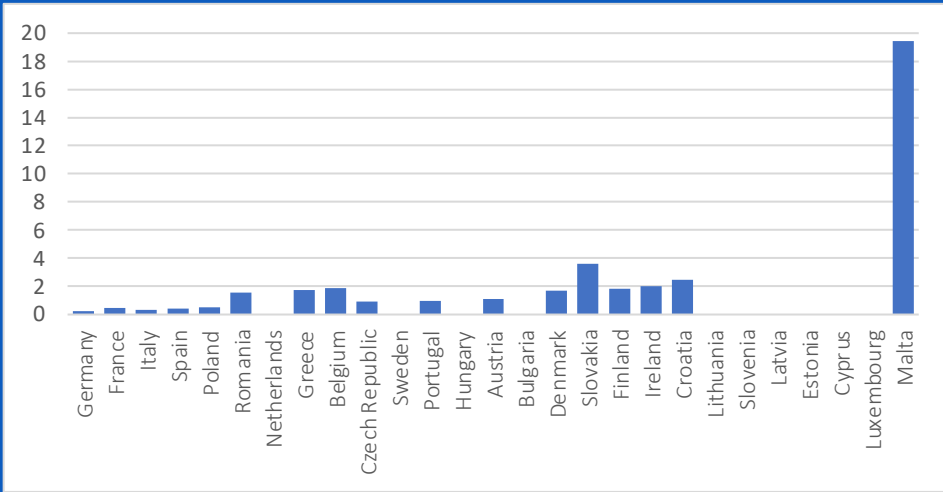
While no single Member States received an extreme number of elected citizens, the distributions under the group system are not in line with the EU's demography, and medium and smaller Member States are often over-represented.

Volatility

Structural discrimination

Over-representation

Respect for preferences



From top to bottom and left to right, the number of elected citizens per 10 million inhabitants for:

1. EP Proposal
2. Slight variation with larger first group
3. 3 groups of 9 Member States
4. Example with 4 groups

The representation of citizens from medium and smaller Member States reaches 20, 30, 60, or even 80 times that of citizens from the largest Member States.

Volatility

Structural discrimination

Over-representation

Respect for preferences

Limited respect for parties/lists' preferences ☹️

- All other essential criteria being equal, distribution mechanisms should aim at respecting the political preferences of parties or electoral lists.
- This means having the minimum possible impact on the ordering decided by parties or electoral lists and, as far as possible, assigning seats in the order initially and freely desired by parties or electoral lists.
- Using the EP's proposal, seats are attributed to candidates in the direct order of the re-ordered lists; however, this comes following an extensive re-ordering process forced by the group system.
- As a result, the group system fails to respect parties/lists' initial preferences in the election of their candidates.

From top to bottom and left to right:

1. EP Proposal
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The tables show the positions of elected citizens on parties/lists' initial ordering. Regardless of the modalities of the group system, parties/lists' preferences are heavily impacted and cannot be considered respected.

	ALDE	ECPM	ECR	EDP	EFA	EGP	EPP	ID	PEL	PES	Pirates	Volt
1	France	Nether.	Poland	France	Spain	Germany	Germany	Italy	France	Spain	Czech Rep	Germany
2	Spain	Germany	Italy	Germany	Belgium	France	Poland	France	Greece	Italy	Germany	Nether.
3	Romania	Romania	Spain	Spain	France	Belgium	Romania	Germany	Germany	Germany	Denmark	Spain
4	Nether.	Croatia	Czech Rep	Italy	Latvia	Italy	Spain	Belgium	Spain	Romania	Italy	Belgium
5	Denmark	Slovakia	Sweden	Romania	Italy	Nether.	Italy	Austria	Ireland	Portugal	France	Lux.
6	Germany	Spain	Nether.	Belgium	Germany	Austria	France	Finland	Portugal	Poland	Sweden	Bulgaria
7	Czech Rep	Italy	Bulgaria	Greece	Greece	Sweden	Greece	Czech Rep	Cyprus	France	Spain	France
8	Belgium	Latvia	Latvia	Slovenia	Czech Rep	Finland	Austria	Denmark	Belgium	Nether.	Lux.	Italy
9	Sweden	France	Greece	Portugal	Slovakia	Denmark	Portugal	Nether.	Nether.	Sweden	Finland	Poland
10	Finland	Poland	Slovakia	Croatia	Poland	Ireland	Bulgaria	Estonia	Sweden	Austria	Nether.	Romania
11	Bulgaria	Belgium	Lithuania	Cyprus	Romania	Lithuania	Sweden	Hungary	Czech Rep	Hungary	Poland	Greece
12	Estonia	Greece	Germany	Poland	Nether.	Portugal	Nether.	Bulgaria	Finland	Bulgaria	Romania	Czech Rep
13	Slovakia	Czech Rep	Belgium	Nether.	Sweden	Spain	Ireland	Greece	Italy	Croatia	Belgium	Sweden
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15	Ireland	Portugal	France	Sweden	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	Poland	Romania	Belgium	Portugal	Hungary
16	Slovenia	Hungary	Luxembourg	Hungary	Austria	Czech Republic	Belgium	Spain	Slovenia	Denmark	Hungary	Austria
17	Luxembourg	Austria	Finland	Austria	Bulgaria	Hungary	Lithuania	Romania	Austria	Slovakia	Austria	Denmark
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	ALDE	ECPM	ECR	EDP	EFA	EGP	EPP	ID	PEL	PES	Pirates	Volt
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3	Romania	Romania	Spain	Spain	France	Belgium	Romania	Germany	Germany	Germany	Denmark	Spain
4	Nether.	Croatia	Czech Rep	Italy	Latvia	Italy	Spain	Belgium	Spain	Romania	Italy	Belgium
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8	Belgium	Latvia	Latvia	Slovenia	Czech Rep	Finland	Austria	Denmark	Belgium	Nether.	Lux.	Italy
9	Sweden	France	Greece	Portugal	Slovakia	Denmark	Portugal	Nether.	Nether.	Sweden	Finland	Poland
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13	Slovakia	Czech Rep	Belgium	Nether.	Sweden	Spain	Ireland	Greece	Italy	Croatia	Belgium	Sweden
14	Hungary	Sweden	Croatia	Czech Rep	Portugal	Lux.	Czech Rep	Slovakia	Denmark	Malta	Greece	Portugal
15	Ireland	Portugal	France	Sweden	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	Poland	Romania	Belgium	Portugal	Hungary
16	Slovenia	Hungary	Luxembourg	Hungary	Austria	Czech Republic	Belgium	Spain	Slovenia	Denmark	Hungary	Austria
17	Luxembourg	Austria	Finland	Austria	Bulgaria	Hungary	Lithuania	Romania	Austria	Slovakia	Austria	Denmark
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3	Romania	Romania	Spain	Spain	France	Belgium	Romania	Germany	Germany	Germany	Denmark	Spain
4	Nether.	Croatia	Czech Rep	Italy	Latvia	Italy	Spain	Belgium	Spain	Romania	Italy	Belgium
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7	Czech Rep	Italy	Bulgaria	Greece	Greece	Sweden	Greece	Czech Rep	Cyprus	France	Spain	France
8	Belgium	Latvia	Latvia	Slovenia	Czech Rep	Finland	Austria	Denmark	Belgium	Nether.	Lux.	Italy
9	Sweden	France	Greece	Portugal	Slovakia	Denmark	Portugal	Nether.	Nether.	Sweden	Finland	Poland
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11	Bulgaria	Belgium	Lithuania	Cyprus	Romania	Lithuania	Sweden	Hungary	Czech Rep	Hungary	Poland	Greece
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13	Slovakia	Czech Rep	Belgium	Nether.	Sweden	Spain	Ireland	Greece	Italy	Croatia	Belgium	Sweden
14	Hungary	Sweden	Croatia	Czech Rep	Portugal	Lux.	Czech Rep	Slovakia	Denmark	Malta	Greece	Portugal
15	Ireland	Portugal	France	Sweden	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	Poland	Romania	Belgium	Portugal	Hungary
16	Slovenia	Hungary	Luxembourg	Hungary	Austria	Czech Republic	Belgium	Spain	Slovenia	Denmark	Hungary	Austria
17	Luxembourg	Austria	Finland	Austria	Bulgaria	Hungary	Lithuania	Romania	Austria	Slovakia	Austria	Denmark
18	Italy	Bulgaria	Romania	Bulgaria	Denmark	Greece	Croatia	Sweden	Luxembourg	Greece	Bulgaria	Finland

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3	Romania	Romania	Spain	Spain	France	Belgium	Romania	Germany	Germany	Germany	Denmark	Spain
4	Nether.	Croatia	Czech Rep	Italy	Latvia	Italy	Spain	Belgium	Spain	Romania	Italy	Belgium
5	Denmark	Slovakia	Sweden	Romania	Italy	Nether.	Italy	Austria	Ireland	Portugal	France	Lux.
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8	Belgium	Latvia	Latvia	Slovenia	Czech Rep	Finland	Austria	Denmark	Belgium	Nether.	Lux.	Italy
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16	Slovenia	Hungary	Luxembourg	Hungary	Austria	Czech Republic	Belgium	Spain	Slovenia	Denmark	Hungary	Austria
17	Luxembourg	Austria	Finland	Austria	Bulgaria	Hungary	Lithuania	Romania	Austria	Slovakia	Austria	Denmark
18	Italy	Bulgaria	Romania	Bulgaria	Denmark	Greece	Croatia	Sweden	Luxembourg	Greece	Bulgaria	Finland

Volatility

Structural discrimination

Over-representation

Respect for preferences

In conclusion

- The EP's proposal checks some essential pre-requisites for a transnational lists system: it relies on a single EU constituency, ensures party proportionality, and tries to avoid over-representation. However, the reliance on a "group system" is flawed and creates unavoidable and unacceptable shortcomings.
- Firstly, the proposal does not adequately prevent over-representation, as it does not account for Member States' demography: having X citizens elected from Germany is not the same level of representation as X citizens elected from Luxembourg or Malta. Legislative houses should strive for fair levels of representation.
- Secondly, the group system is very volatile, and small changes in the number or structure of groups can have a dramatic impact on which citizens are elected and, therefore, on Member States' levels of representation.
- Thirdly, the extensive re-ordering induced by the group system fails to respect parties/lists' preferences of the order in which their candidates should be elected.
- Finally, and most detrimentally, the use of a group system introduces a clear premium in favour of the largest countries of each group, and an unavoidable structural discrimination against the last countries of each group, with no objective reasons for countries' location in their respective groups.
- Overall, the EP's proposal and its proposed group system lead to unacceptable shortcomings and cannot be considered a satisfactory proposal for the election of a European transnational constituency.