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**Differentiated Integration in the European
Union: a Comparative Study of Party and
Government Preferences in Finland,
Sweden and Norway**

Benjamin Leruth

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Declaration

Edinburgh, Friday 18 April 2014

This is to certify that the work contained within has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Benjamin Leruth

Abstract

In the field of European studies, the notion of ‘differentiated integration’ (Stubb 1996) was developed in the late 1990s as an alternative to the crude membership/non-membership dichotomy. While the theoretical benefits of this approach are broadly discussed in the existing literature, further empirical studies have been deemed necessary (Holzinger and Schimmelfennig 2012). The Nordic states constitute a particularly interesting laboratory in order to study this phenomenon. Indeed, while these states share several socio-economic and political characteristics, they also differ in terms of their relationship with the European Union.

Several studies on these relationships emphasise the relevance of certain contextual variables as key explanatory factors for the variation in attitudes between the Nordic states. However, there is also lack of analysis that looks into the domestic political features that these countries share. Furthermore, most studies in the field tend to ignore the respective government’s positions on European integration, and mostly adopt a top-down approach when focusing on the nation-state as a whole. Adopting a most similar systems design, this thesis aims to answer the following question: have Nordic government preferences on European integration been influenced by domestic political factors? In order to answer this question, four domestic variables are introduced and analysed: relative strength of parties in parliament; composition of government; type of government; and government ideology.

Within this comparative framework, three Nordic countries have been selected: the first one belonging to the ‘inner core’ of the European Union (Finland); while the second is located at its ‘outer core’ (Sweden); and the third one serves as a control case as an ‘EU-outsider’ which is still located in the Union’s ‘inner periphery’ (Norway). For each state, the analysis starts in the early 1990s, when ‘Europe’ developed into a politically salient issue in domestic politics. The focus is furthermore set on their respective government’s positions regarding five distinct policy areas: participation in the European Economic Area; application for European Union membership; participation in the Schengen Area; participation in the Economic and Monetary Union; and participation in European Battle Groups.

The main findings of the thesis suggest that when analysing governments’ positions on (differentiated) European integration, the domestic political features should not be downplayed. For instance, the Swedish government’s opposition to participation in the EMU in 1997 is mostly explained by a lack of party consensus over this issue, unlike in Finland where a broad inter-party agreement was secured for this policy area. The analysis further suggests that studies on party and government preferences on Europe should focus on policy areas rather than on the issue of integration as a whole. Such a focus provides for better understanding of the nature of ‘Euro scepticism’ in the Nordic region and, to a broader extent, in Europe.

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List of abbreviations

AFSJ	Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CMP	Comparative Manifesto Project
EUBG	European Union Battle Group
EC	European Community
EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Agreement
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
EU	European Union
EUROJUST	European Union Judicial Cooperation Unit
EUROPOL	European Police Office
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
MP	Member of Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NBG	Nordic Battle Group
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UK	United Kingdom
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEU	Western European Union

Finnish political parties

KD	Christian Democrats (<i>Kristillisdemokraatit</i>)
KESK	Centre Party (<i>Keskusta</i>)
KOK	National Coalition Party (<i>Kansallinen Kokoomus</i>)
PS	Finns Party (<i>Perussuomalaiset</i>)
RKP	Swedish People's Party (<i>Suomen ruotsalainen kansanpuolue / Svenska folkpartiet i Finland</i>)

SDP	Social Democratic Party (<i>Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue</i>)
SMP	Rural Party (<i>Suomen Maaseudun Puolue</i>)
VAS	Left Alliance (<i>Vasemmistoliitto</i>)
VIHR	Green League (<i>Vihreä Liitto</i>)

Swedish political parties

C	Centre Party (<i>Centerpartiet</i>)
Fp	Liberal People's Party (<i>Folkpartiet Liberalerna</i>)
KDS	Christian Democrats (<i>Kristdemokraterna</i>)
M	Moderate Party (<i>Moderata samlingspartiet</i>)
MdG	Green Party (<i>Miljöpartiet de Gröna</i>)
NyD	New Democracy (<i>Ny Demokrati</i>)
SAP	Social Democratic Party (<i>Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti</i>)
SD	Swedish Democrats (<i>Sverigedemokraterna</i>)
Vp	Left Party (<i>Vänsterpartiet</i>)
VPK	Communist Party (<i>Vänsterpartiet kommunisterna</i>)

Norwegian political parties

A	Labour Party (<i>Arbeiderpartiet</i>)
FrP	Progress Party (<i>Fremskrittspartiet</i>)
H	Conservative Party (<i>Høyre</i>)
KrF	Christian Democratic Party (<i>Kristelig Folkeparti</i>)
Sp	Centre Party (<i>Senterpartiet</i>)
SV	Socialist Left Party (<i>Sosialistisk Venstreparti</i>)
V	Liberal Party (<i>Venstre</i>)

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Why do states participate in the process of regional integration? Studies on regionalism tend to focus on explaining why states seek membership within a regional organisation (see e.g. Baldwin 1993; Laursen 2003). In the case of European Union [EU] *integration*, several competing theories have been put forward to explain the position of national political elites. Until recently, however, the literature on EU integration has mostly emphasised elite views on *membership* (see e.g. Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). But the diverse responses to agreements between states and the European Union¹ occurring in the 1990s has made the membership/non-membership dichotomy obsolete for fully understanding the relationship between states and the European Union.

To go beyond this crude in/out dichotomy, we need further analysis of other modes of European integration covered by the notion of *differentiated integration*, which is an umbrella term encompassing various integration strategies sometimes referred to as ‘opt-ins’ and ‘opt-outs’. As discussed by Holzinger and Schimmelfennig (2012: 293), “empirical analysis has been limited to a few important cases of treaty law (such as [Economic and Monetary Union] EMU and Schengen), but there are no comprehensive data sets”. An explanation for this gap in the literature is the fact that until the early 1990s and the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, discussions on differentiated integration were limited (Stubb 1996).

The Nordic states² (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) constitute illuminating examples for the study of differentiated integration. Indeed, even though “the Nordic countries together constitute a linguistic, cultural, economic, social, and political-ideological area, of considerable homogeneity” (Andrén 1967: 8-9), each of them changed its relations and relationships with the EU institutions at a different pace and level. There is thus a strong divergence in terms of the Nordic experience of European integration. At the time of writing, three of the five states are members of the European Union. Finland (which joined in 1995) is considered as being close to the core of EU activity (Mouritzen

¹ For the purposes of brevity and clarity, the use of the term ‘European Union’ is used as a synonym of ‘European Community’ [EC].

² The notion of ‘Nordic states’ shall not be confused with ‘Scandinavia’, which applies to only three Nordic states: Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

and Wivel 2005), Sweden (1995) is commonly considered as an ‘Euro-outsider’ (Lindahl and Naurin 2005) and Denmark (1973) has opted out of three core EU policy areas (Economic and Monetary Union, aspects of the Common Foreign and Security Policy [CFSP], as well as the then Justice and Home Affairs [JHA] pillar) through the Edinburgh Agreement. As such, Denmark has operated one of the most visible and institutional forms of differentiation in the European Union (Miles 2010). The two remaining Nordic states, Iceland and Norway, are members of the European Economic Area [EEA] but currently remain outside of the European Union. Furthermore, both states negotiated a set of bilateral agreements giving them the right to participate in other policy areas that are not covered by the EEA agreement. Following the recent financial crisis, Iceland applied for EU membership for the first time in its history in 2009, but the centre-right cabinet appointed in 2013 decided to freeze accession talks with the European Commission. Norway, however, has no current prospect of joining the European ‘club’, despite four previous applications and various (in)formal agreements with Brussels. As emphasised by Egeberg and Trondal (1999: 134), Norway may be “even more sectorally penetrated or harmonized” than other EU members as far as policy harmonization is concerned, meaning that non-membership may still involve a great deal of integration. Rieker (2006: 284) even views Norway as a “class B member of the EU – a country that is well integrated into most policy areas, but lacking real political influence”. It is thus an interesting comparative enquiry to ask why states that are so similar have all adopted a different form of European integration. Adopting a most-similar systems design and focusing on government preferences, this thesis addresses this puzzle and aims to answer the following question: **have Nordic government preferences on European integration been influenced by domestic political factors?**

This introductory chapter is structured as follows. The first section contextualises this analysis by defining the notion of differentiated integration and explaining how this concept enables researchers to better understand the relationships between states and the European Union. The second section discusses the empirical focus of this work, the Nordic states, and examines why this region of Europe constitutes an interesting ‘laboratory’ for the study of differentiated integration. The third section of the chapter finally outlines the structure of this thesis, highlights the central arguments made and briefly discusses the conclusions the study will present.

1.1. Differentiated integration in the European Union

1.1.1. What is differentiated integration?

The notion of differentiated integration appeared in the academic literature in the mid-1990s, following the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and negotiations of several opt-outs. Often used interchangeably with the notion of ‘flexible integration’ (see e.g. Kölliker 2001; 2006; Warleigh 2002; Holzinger and Schimmelfennig 2012), diverging views on its nature has led to the emergence of various definitions. A lack of consensus characterises the academic literature; some leading researchers even avoid offering an explicit definition on the term (see for instance Warleigh 2002; Andersen and Sitter 2006; de Neve 2007). The first attempt to grasp this ‘moving target’ was made by Stubb (1996: 283), who defines differentiated integration as “the general mode of integration strategies which try to reconcile heterogeneity within the European Union”.

Challenging this definition, Kölliker (2001: 127) states that differentiated integration “constitutes the general term for the possibility of member states to have different rights and obligations with respect to certain common policy areas”. Similarly, Dyson and Sepos (2010: 4) define it as “[...] the process whereby European States, or sub-units, opt to move at different speeds and/or towards different objectives with regard to common policies, by adopting different formal and informal arrangements, whether inside or outside the EU treaty framework, and by assuming different rights and obligations”. This extends Kölliker’s definition by including “formal and informal arrangements” in the framework of differentiation, which were first introduced by Andersen and Sitter (2006). Nevertheless, both definitions might be considered as too narrow, as the emphasis is put on member states (i.e. the *demand* side of differentiation), neglecting the power of supranational institutions to shape European integration (i.e. the *supply* side of differentiation).

A recent contribution by Leuffen *et al.* (2013: 10) defines the EU as a *system* of differentiated integration, i.e. “one Europe with an organizational and member state core but with a level of centralization and territorial extension that vary by function”. This innovative approach puts differentiated integration at the same level as a federal state or an international organisation, by characterising it as a political system. In that sense,

defining differentiated integration as a political system might be controversial, as the notion itself is also used as a general term for different types of integration such as Europe à la Carte or Multi-Speed Europe (Stubb 1996; Warleigh 2002; Holzinger and Schimmelfennig 2012). Furthermore, this definition still needs to be tested empirically. In sum, it is difficult to provide a single definition of differentiated integration. Since the emergence of this notion, views have strongly diverged and it might be tricky to suggest a commonly accepted definition. That is why, within the framework of the thesis, the retained definition of differentiated integration is the one used by Stubb, i.e. *the general mode of integration strategies which try to reconcile heterogeneity within the European Union*. Even though somewhat blurry, this general definition appears as the most consensual approach to assess the notion of differentiated integration.

1.1.2. Categorising Differentiated Integration

Alongside defining the notion of differentiated integration, several attempts to offer a typology were presented in the literature over the past twenty years. Stubb (1996) lists about 30 models and also classifies differentiated integration into three categories linked to general concepts of European integration: ‘time’ (or ‘temporal differentiation’), with ‘Multi-Speed Europe’ as main concept;³ ‘space’ (or ‘territorial differentiation’), with ‘Variable Geometry Europe’ as the main concept;⁴ and ‘matter’ (or ‘sectoral differentiation’), with ‘A La Carte Europe’ as main concept.⁵

Holzinger and Schimmelfennig (2012) criticised this classification, underlining, for instance, the fact that differentiation always has territorial and sectoral impacts, and that purely functional conceptions are not included in this categorisation. As an alternative to Stubb’s work, they offer a categorisation into six dimensions:

³ Stubb (1996: 285) defines multi-speed Europe as a “mode of differentiated integration according to which the pursuit of common objectives is driven by a group of Member States which are both able and willing to go further, the underlying assumption being that the others will follow later”.

⁴ “Mode of differentiated integration which admits to unattainable differences within the integrative structure by allowing permanent or irreversible separation between a hard core and lesser developed integrative units” (ibid.).

⁵ “Mode of differentiated integration whereby respective Member States are able to pick-and-choose, as from a menu, in which policy they would like to participate, whilst at the same time holding only to a minimum number of common objectives” (ibid.).

- 1) Permanent v. temporary differentiation;
- 2) Territorial v. purely functional differentiation;
- 3) Differentiation across nation states v. multi-level differentiation;
- 4) Differentiation takes place within the EU treaties v. outside the EU treaties;
- 5) Decision-making at EU level v. at regime level (i.e. intergovernmental decisions);
- 6) Only for member states v. also for non-member states/areas outside the EU territory.

The authors also underline that empirical examples can be found for almost all models, suggesting that “differentiated integration comes in an astonishing variety of forms and [...] the concepts of differentiated integration can and should be used systematically to describe these forms and their frequency” (Holzinger and Schimmelfennig 2012: 297). The categorisation offered by the authors provides a meticulous way of analysing differentiated integration, which reflects the complex reality of European integration, as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Holzinger and Schimmelfennig’s categorisation of differentiated integration

Dimension										
1	Temporary			Permanent						
2	Territorial									Functional
3	Differentiation at nation-state level						Multi-level differentiation			
4	Only inside EU treaties				Also outside EU treaties			Only inside	Also outside EU treaties	
5	EU decision-making						Club decision-making (intergovernmental)			
6	Only member states			Also non-members	Only members	Also non-member states		Only members	Also jurisdictions outside EU	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Models	Multiple Speed	Multiple Standards	Avantgarde Europe	Core Europe, Concentric Circles	Flexible integration	Variable Geometry	Europe à la carte	Optimal Level of Jurisdiction	Flexible Co-operation	Functional, Overlapping and Competing Jurisdictions
Examples	Many in secondary law	In secondary law, e.g. environmental policy	EMU, basic rights charter	EMU, EEA, associated states	Enhanced co-operation, Bologna (at the start)	Schengen	Bologna	Competence allocation in Lisbon Treaty	EUREGIOS	No example

Source: Holzinger and Schimmelfennig (2012).

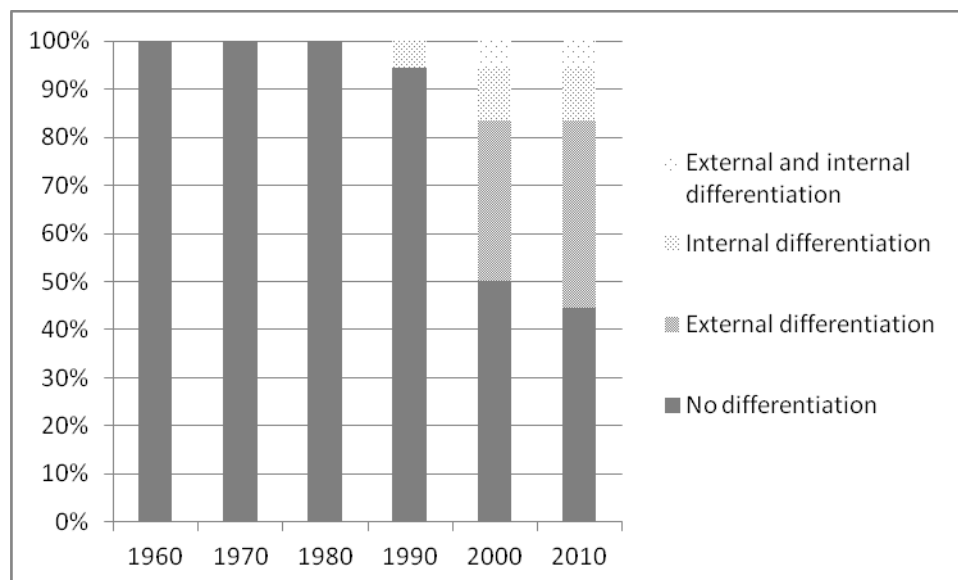
Another attempt at categorising differentiated integration was made by Leuffen *et al.* (2013), in addition to their definition outlined above. Basing their study on primary law, they start from the assumption that “the EU potentially covers the entire range of policies, but that each policy varies with regard to the level of centralization and the territorial extension” (ibid.: 12). They determine that differentiated integration is composed of two main categories: the variation in the level of centralisation across policies (*vertical differentiation*), and the variation in territorial extension across policies (*horizontal differentiation*). Furthermore, they classify horizontal differentiation into four sub-categories:

- 1) No horizontal differentiation: all EU rules apply uniformly to all EU member states. This was the case until the early 1990s, before differentiated integration was implemented through the Maastricht Treaty;
- 2) External differentiation: EU rules apply uniformly to all EU member states, but non-member states can also adopt these rules. The European Economic Area illustrates this type of horizontal differentiation: all EU member states are members of the EEA, as well as three non-members – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.
- 3) Internal differentiation: EU rules do not apply uniformly to all EU member states. For instance, this type of horizontal differentiation applies when EU member states decide to opt out from membership in a policy area. This is the case of Denmark (through the Edinburgh Agreement), the United Kingdom [UK] (who opted out from several policies through the Maastricht Treaty) and Sweden (who has not joined the EMU). Another example of internal differentiation is the enhanced co-operation procedure, introduced by the Treaty of Amsterdam and allowing at least one third of the EU member states to adopt a policy within the EU framework, without affecting states that are not willing to co-operate.
- 4) Internal and external differentiation: EU rules from which some EU member states opted out, while non-member states opted in. An example of internal and external differentiation is the Schengen agreement: while Ireland and the United Kingdom opted out from this policy, four non-EU members (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) opted in.

In order to avoid semantic confusion and to understand differentiated integration within the context of this thesis, Leuffen *et al.*'s conceptualisation is retained. Furthermore, this thesis focuses on the territorial aspect of differentiated integration through the relationship between Nordic states and the European Union: the emphasis is thus put on the horizontal dimension of integration. In other words, this study analyses government positions on *state participation in the process of European integration, and more particularly in policy areas where differentiated integration takes place.*

1.1.3. Evolution of horizontal differentiation in the European Union

Figure 1.1 Evolution of horizontal differentiation over time



Source: Leuffen *et al.* (2013). Analysis based on the 18 policy areas covered in European integration.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the evolution of horizontal differentiation over time. Member states uniformly applied EU rules until the 1980s. Throughout the 1990s, the use of differentiated integration increased. As of 2010, more than half of EU policies are implemented in different ways. Moreover, one can observe a strong increase in external differentiation, which can mostly be explained by the fact that non-EU member states joined the Single Market (Leuffen *et al.* 2013).

The issue of differentiated integration appeared only recently in EU official documents. While certain limited elements of (legal) differentiation are present in the Treaty of Rome

(see e.g. Hanf 2001), the idea of differentiated integration finds its roots in a report on the future of European integration written by Belgian Prime Minister Leo Tindemans (1975), in which he laid the foundations of a ‘multi-speed Europe’ without explicitly mentioning this notion (Stubb 1996). The general concept of differentiation appeared for the first time in the primary Community law in 1986, as stated in Article 8c of the Single European Act (now Article 27 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union [TFEU]):

When drawing up its proposals with a view to achieving the objectives set out in Article 7a [now Article 26 TFEU, author’s note], the Commission shall take into account the extent of the effort that certain economies showing differences in development will have to sustain for the establishment of the internal market and it may propose appropriate provisions. If these provisions take the form of derogations, they must be of a temporary nature and must cause the least possible disturbance to the functioning of the internal market.

Despite early publications based on the Tindemans Report and the Single European Act in the 1980s (see e.g. Wallace *et al.* 1983; Ehlermann 1984), academic discussions on differentiated integration arose in the early 1990s for three main reasons. First, several opt-outs from the Maastricht Treaty were granted to the United Kingdom and Denmark in 1993, leading towards more institutionalised differentiation and raising questions on the future of European integration. Second, the end of the Cold War opened the door to the future ‘big bang enlargement’, creating new challenges for the future of European integration with the potential diversification of national interests (Centre for Economic Policy Research 1995). Finally, shortly after the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, Ehlermann (1995: 1) outlined the fact that “the next Intergovernmental Conference will (and should) open the door for more possibilities of non-traditional differentiation”. Accordingly, discussions on the constitutionalisation of differentiated integration in the Treaty of Amsterdam arose.

As mentioned above, horizontal differentiation started developing in the early 1990s following British and Danish opt-outs from the Maastricht Treaty. However, as predicted by Ehlermann (*ibid.*), the Amsterdam Treaty *constitutionalised* differentiated integration by introducing the enhanced co-operation procedure. In addition, as emphasised by Leuffen *et al.* (2013: 27), “[u]nder the threat of non-ratification, recent treaties include or are accompanied by exemptions or other special clauses for individual member states”. The use of external differentiation also increased over time as the EU “has vastly expanded

and differentiated its institutional relations with third countries since the early 1990s” (ibid.). As of 2013, the latest use of differentiated integration relates to the European Fiscal Compact, signed on 2 March 2012 by all EU member states with the exception of the United Kingdom and Czech Republic and which came into force on 1 January 2013.

As demonstrated in this sub-section, differentiated integration (and more particularly horizontal differentiation) is now a well-established phenomenon in the European Union. Furthermore, with recent calls for an even more flexible Union from several leading European political figures (see e.g. Cameron 2013; Hollande 2013), basing a study on this issue will largely contribute to the future of European studies.

1.1.4. Horizontal differentiated integration and European integration theories

Established theories of European integration tend to ignore differentiated integration. While older integration theories such as the classical versions of neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism can be excused as they were elaborated on at a time when differentiated integration was not an institutional reality, more recent theories resulting from neo-institutionalist perspectives (i.e. liberal intergovernmentalism, supranationalism and constructivism) did not fill this gap in the literature (Mattli 1999; Moravcsik and Nicolaïdis 1999; Kölliker 2006; Leuffen *et al.* 2013). Nevertheless, some elements of those theories can help to understand the phenomenon, especially with regards to the *demand-side* of differentiated integration (i.e. the conditions of state participation in a policy). Table 1.2 outlines the conditions for state participation according to European integration theories.

Table 1.2 Conditions for state participation in EU policies, by integration theory

Intergovernmentalism	Supranationalism	Constructivism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High international dependence • Mainstream preferences • Low compliance costs • Low autonomy costs • Small state • Weak ratification constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong transnational interactions • Strong supranational actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak exclusive national identities • Mainstream idea • High legitimacy of European integration • Low politicisation • Weak ratification constraints

Source: based on Leuffen *et al.* (2013)

According to the intergovernmentalist perspective, small, highly dependent states with low autonomy and compliance costs and weak ratification constraint are considered as the most integration-friendly countries. The supranational approach determines that states with strong transnational interactions and high dependence on supranational organisations are more integration-friendly. Finally, the constructivist approach expects that “exclusive national identities, outlier ideas, high domestic politicisation and weak domestic legitimacy of European integration, and high domestic ratification constraints to be the most likely non-member or opt-out countries” (Leuffen *et al.* 2013: 107).

Yet crucially all three different approaches neglect important factors linked to domestic developments. Government preferences on European integration constitute a decisive factor in shaping the relationship between a country and the EU. Accordingly, one of the main goals of this thesis is to contribute to the literature by assessing whether domestic political variables shape Nordic governments’ preferences regarding participation in the European integration process, especially where differentiated integration takes place. This study thus goes beyond the traditional membership/non-membership dichotomy. The following chapter will now explain why an analysis based on the Nordic states is relevant for such a comparative study.

1.2. Why the Nordic states?

As previously mentioned, the literature generally acknowledges strong cultural, political and socio-economic similarities between the Nordic states. Such similarities are covered by the notion of ‘Nordic community’, or *Norden* (Hansen 2002). Several authors outline the existence of a ‘Nordic model’ (Arter 1999; 2006; but 2008; Heidar 2004a; Christiansen *et al.* 2006; Hilson 2008; Götz and Haggrén 2009): in their views, the Nordic states share strong economic and/or political characteristics which differentiate them from other international communities. One might therefore expect a similar experience in terms of regional integration but this does not appear to be the case, as discussed in the introductory section. Accordingly, the Nordic area constitutes an interesting ‘laboratory’ for the study of European integration.

This analysis does not evaluate or discuss the relevance of the so-called ‘Nordic model’. This notion is largely debated elsewhere, and its evolution is also controversial. For instance, in the late 1990s, Arter (1999) acknowledged the existence of a Nordic model of government, including seven main features. However, in 2008, he argued that there has *not* been a Nordic but rather a ‘*Scandinavian* model of government’, with the 1960s being its heyday, and that this notion is now a “receding memory” (Arter 2008: 166; see also Miles 1996). Instead of referring to the existence of a model, I use the notion of ‘Nordic variables’ as *political* characteristics historically shared by the five Nordic states and commonly accepted in the literature. These variables serve as basis for this analysis and are further discussed in Chapter 2. It is important to highlight that these characteristics are not unique to the Nordic region: they can also be found in other European countries as well. Furthermore, umbrella terms such as Lijphart’s definitions of ‘consensus’ and ‘majoritarian’ democracies are not used as variables as such, as these cover several features that do not necessarily apply to all the Nordic states (Lijphart 1999; see also Arter 2006; Persson and Wiberg 2011).

The following paragraphs analyse these ‘Nordic variables’, and determine whether they apply in the context of differentiated integration in the European Union.

A parliamentary system of governance

von Beyme (2000) points to how the Nordic countries have all adopted a parliamentary system of government,⁶ further defined as a system “in which the members of the parliament [MPs] determine the cabinet’s formation and where any majority of the MPs, at virtually any time, may vote the government ministers out of office” (Rasch 2011a: 238). In other words, the government is politically accountable to the parliament. This might have an impact on the government’s position on European integration since, in a parliamentary system, the government is not likely to take a stand that will not be supported by the parliament. The government’s leeway is thus restrained by the legislative power.

A strong tradition of dominant social democratic parties

Arter (1999) and Brandal *et al.* (2013) observe that the parties that have historically been the largest in the Nordic states have tended to belong to social democratic party family, except in the case of Iceland. Taking into account that social democratic party leaderships are often considered as pro-European,⁷ it might be argued that this feature plays an important role in shaping the relationship between Nordic states and the European Union. This is particularly the case in terms of ‘membership’, as all Nordic states applied for EU membership while their social democratic parties were the largest parties in their respective parliaments.

Representative democracies/ moderate ‘working multiparty systems’

The notion of a ‘working multiparty system’ covers the ability of parties to work together effectively, whether in government or opposition, to produce public policy (Rustow 1956; Arter 1999). In contrast to two-party systems used in countries such as the United States, multiparty systems offer democratic accountability, leading those systems to be characterised as *representative democracies* (Heidar 2004a). Since 1989, the amount of political

⁶ Some authors suggest that Finland move from semi-presidentialism to parliamentarism following constitutional reforms which took place in 2000 (see for instance Rasch 2011b). This will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

⁷ This will be discussed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

parties represented in Nordic parliaments has varied between five (Iceland throughout the whole period) and ten (Finland, 1995-1999). According to Sartori's original classification of multiparty systems, the Nordic states should be considered as 'extreme' multiparty systems,⁸ in which parties are strongly polarised and seek to mobilise voters at the extremes (Sartori 1976). However, the Nordic states may be better understood as examples of a 'moderate' multiparty system since parties tend to compete for the median, rather than the fringe, voter (Heidar 2004a). These 'working multi-party systems' are thus likely to give birth to multiple coalitions of several parties. Regarding European integration, preferences of coalition partners might diverge: such divisions could play a significant role in the agenda-setting process.

Similar and well-established party families predominantly compete on a left-right dimension

Berglund and Lindström (1978) emphasised the existence of a 'five-party model' and determined that Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden all have parties belonging to the same party families: Conservatives, Liberals, Agrarians, Social Democrats and Communists. Furthermore, all those parties "fall along one dimension (left-right) defined in economic terms" (ibid.: 18). Since the late 1970s, major changes have taken place as new party families emerged as well as disappeared (Grendstad 2003). In other words, the Nordic party systems progressively switched from a traditional five-party model to a more complex figure with eight broad party types: Conservatives, Liberals, Agrarians, Social Democrats, Socialist Left (formerly Communists), Christian Democrats, Greens and Populist Right.⁹ Several studies have showed that these parties are still predominantly competing on an (economic) left-right dimension (Gilljam and Oscarsson 1996; Grendstad 2003; Arter 2008). Within the context of European integration, Hooghe *et al.* (2002: 985) demonstrated that this left-right division also structures party positions on integration: "[p]olitical parties located toward the Left extreme and the Right extreme –

⁸ Extreme multiparty systems are defined by Sartori (1966) as systems with more than five parties; however, Lijphart (1977: 63) stated that Sartori later retreated from "drawing the dividing line between moderate and extreme multiparty systems at exactly the point of transition from a four-party to a five-party system".

⁹ The notion of 'populist right party' has been preferred to 'far-right', 'extreme right' or 'radical right'. In the words of Widfeldt (2000a: 488), this notion defines political parties that "stand for political ideas normally considered as to the right, especially on economic issues but also on cultural issues. It also means that they are organised around one charismatic leader and they appeal to the 'common man' against the political establishment". On debates regarding these notions see, e.g., Betz (1993); Taggart (1995); Mudde (2007).

peripheral parties– are significantly more Euro-skeptical than parties toward the Center”. To put it differently, non-centrist parties will be more opposed to European co-operation than centrist parties. Accordingly, within the framework of this thesis, one might expect that party location on the left-right scale affects support for European integration.

A tradition of minority and/or one-party governments

By definition, and as developed above, a parliamentary system is a democracy in which the executive power must be endorsed by the parliament (Bogdanor 1984). However, this does not mean that governments have to be composed of parties representing an absolute majority within parliament. In some cases, governments might only be *tolerated*: these are minority government. Furthermore, (minority) governments might be composed of only one party, demonstrating the reluctance of other parties to enter formal coalitions (Strøm 1986). Bergman (1993) and Rasch (2011b) established that the Nordic states have a strong tradition of minority and/or one-party governments.¹⁰ This situation might thus affect government positions as well: for instance, a pro-European minority government cannot act without the consent of a majority of MPs, which strongly restrains its powers and opportunities to enact major changes with regard to the country’s relationship with the EU.

Corporatist policy-making

Under a corporatist policy-making mechanism, organised groups representing special interests are engaged in the political decision-making process (Sejersted 2001). Historically, this feature applied to the entire Nordic region (Bergman and Strøm 2011). In fact, Norway was even ranked as being the world’s most ‘corporatist’ country (Lijphart 1999; Siaroff 1999). Even though corporatism has weakened across the Nordic region since the 1990s, it still remains a strong feature and continues to play an important role in public policy-making (Ingebritsen 1998; Blom-Hansen 2000; Arter 2008; Bergman and

¹⁰ It should be outlined that minority governments are more common in the three Scandinavian states (Denmark, Sweden and Norway) than in Finland and Iceland. In Finland, there has been no minority government since the mid-1970s. See Persson and Wiberg (2011).

Strøm 2011). It is thus likely that such organised groups may try to shape national policies regarding European integration.

A strong economic cleavage but a historical prevalence of the centre-periphery divisions

The original cleavage model (Rokkan and Valen 1964) aimed at understanding electoral behaviour by focusing on social and economic divisions within the Norwegian society. This theory was inspired by the 1962-1963 debates on a potential European Community membership. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) extended this model to define four types of cleavages in Western industrialised countries. The model argues that the “modern European party systems are shaped by a series of historical conflicts about state building, religion, and class that took place from the Protestant Reformation to the Industrial Revolution” (Hooghe and Marks 2001: 163-164). These traditional cleavages are: centre-periphery; state-church; owner-worker and land-industry. Whereas the relevance, and role, of these cleavages is considered to have declined since the ‘earthquake elections’ in the 1970s,¹¹ the division between the industrialised centre (where internationally competitive services are located) and the agrarian periphery (where internationally non-competitive agriculture and sectors are located) is one of the most rooted division within Nordic societies (Aarebrot 1982). Referendums on EU membership illustrate this: whereas the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish ‘No’-vote predominantly came from the countryside, the ‘Yes’-vote tended to be in the big cities (Bjørklund 1996; 1997; Pettersen *et al.* 1996). In contrast, the Copenhagen area voted against membership in 1972 whereas the rest of Denmark voted largely in favour (Buch and Hansen 2002).

A high level of electoral volatility

Up until the late 1960s, voting behaviour was mostly explained by the cleavage model but elections held in the early 1970s significantly changed the situation, especially in Norway, Finland and Denmark (Arter 2008). Not only did the number of parties represented in parliament increase, but it also gave rise to an increased electoral volatility (or ‘voter dealignment’; Knutsen 2004). Indeed, as opposed to the era of ‘frozen cleavages’ (Lipset

¹¹ On the ‘earthquake elections’ and their impact on the Nordic political systems, see e.g. Dalton (1996), Knutsen (2004) and Arter (2008)

and Rokkan 1967) which roughly covered the period between the late 1920s to the late 1960s, the proportion of party switchers increased drastically in the Nordic States, and this trend was confirmed through the years (see e.g. Kristjánsson 2004; Paloheimo and Sundberg 2005; Aardal and Stavn 2006). With regard to European integration, Valen (1973) and Pettersen *et al.* (1996) demonstrated that the issue of membership raised in the 1970s and 1990s activated all traditional cleavages in Norway resulting in a low level of electoral volatility during the referendum. These findings were later confirmed in the Swedish and Finnish 1994 referenda (Bjørklund 1996).

Regional co-operation and consensus

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the concept of 'Norden' (defined at the beginning of this section) was seen as an asset to enhance international co-operation (Andrén 1967). Nordic co-operation thus predates the Treaty of Rome, and became an institutional reality when the Nordic Council was founded in 1952 (Wendt 1959). Amongst the major Nordic agreements made in this Council, it was decided to extend and deepen co-operation through the creation of a Nordic Passport Union, a forerunner of the Schengen agreement, in 1958. Further attempts to consolidate Nordic integration were made in the 1960s, e.g. with talks on the creation of a Nordic economic market (known as Nordek) and a Nordic Defence Union. However, such attempts were largely unsuccessful due to the significant overlap with other free trade agreements (such as the European Free Trade Agreement [EFTA]) and due to Denmark's successful application for an EC membership (Andrén 1984). Elder *et al.* (1988) identified three facets of consensus regarding Nordic co-operation: first, in terms of security (the so-called 'Nordic Balance'); second, in terms of preserving regional unity; and, finally, in terms of consolidating international peace and stability. The end of the Cold War significantly changed the rules, and by the early 1990s, all Nordic states (both through elites and the population) opted for a different relationship with the EU. The 'regional consensus' may, however, have influenced certain Nordic positions on European integration, especially in policy areas covered by the Nordic Council (such as participation in the Schengen area).

Small states

In the literature on international relations, the Nordic countries are characterised as ‘small states’ (Kelstrup 1993; Hanf and Soetendorp 1998; Arter 2000a; Ingebritsen 2006; Panke 2010). Even though it is an uneasy task to give a definition on this notion (see for instance Thorhallsson and Wivel 2006), small states share characteristics which are relevant while studying their relationship with supranational institutions. In particular, joining such institutions imply a loss of independence and effective sovereignty (Keohane 1969), which are both important issues for small states.

This section has outlined the major political characteristics shared by Nordic states, discussed through the notion of ‘Nordic variables’. The relevance of these variables - in the context of European integration - was then discussed. In sum, eleven key variables have been described:

- 1) A parliamentary system of governance;
- 2) A strong tradition of social democratic parties;
- 3) Representative democracy;
- 4) A working multiparty system;
- 5) Similarly well-established party families predominantly competing on an (economic) left-right dimension;
- 6) A tradition of minority and/or one-party governments;
- 7) The use of corporatist policy-making procedures;
- 8) A strong economic cleavage with a prevalence of the centre-periphery division;
- 9) High levels of electoral volatility;
- 10) Regional co-operation and consensus;
- 11) and a classification as being small states.

1.3. Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. This introductory chapter has laid the foundations of this study. It has outlined the theoretical background, the main research question and it has explained why the Nordic region constitutes a relevant empirical focus. In addition, this chapter has outlined the contribution that this work makes to the existing literature on European and Nordic studies by focusing on differentiated integration rather than on the traditional membership/non-membership debate.

Chapter 2 introduces the research design and methodology used in this thesis. It is divided into five sections. The first section of this chapter discusses the research strategy and defines the four selected independent variables, stemming from the aforementioned 'Nordic variables': relative strength of parties in parliament; composition of government; type of government; and government ideology. A total of five testable hypotheses are then formulated regarding the relationship between the Nordic governments' positions on European integration and each of the independent variables. This section further justifies the selection of these four independent variables and explains why some of the 'Nordic variables' have been dismissed. The second section of this chapter then discusses the cases selected to test the hypotheses put forward. Section three reviews the methods used for data collection. Finally, sections four and five examine methodological issues, in order to determine how to measure government positions on European integration as well as how to measure government ideology.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 analyse each of the three Nordic states selected as case studies, from the most integrated to the most segregated: Finland, Sweden and Norway. The chapters are divided into three sections: the evolution of the relationship between the state and the European Union; the national party system in the context of European integration; and the evolution of the governments' positions on European integration throughout the period analysed (i.e. from the early 1990s onwards to 2010). Each of these three chapters concludes with a summary of the empirical findings with regard to the five hypotheses explored in this study.

Chapter 6 offers a comparative analysis of all three case studies. Parties' and governments' positions on European integration are compared, and all the hypotheses formulated in the second chapter are revisited. The analysis shows that the composition of parliaments played an important role in shaping government positions on European integration in the

three countries selected. Furthermore, the comparative analysis determines that the hypotheses on the composition and the type of government are confirmed in most cases, with some notable exceptions. On the other hand, it appears that government ideology does not shape governments' stances on Europe: as such, the hypothesis related to this variable is rejected.

The final chapter builds on and concludes the analysis of Chapter 6 by summarising the findings of the thesis as a whole. It focuses on the empirical and conceptual contributions made to the discussion of differentiated integration and party/government preferences on Europe. Finally, the chapter considers how this work could be taken forward in the future.

Chapter 2. Research design and methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the methodology and research methods used in order to examine the Nordic governments' preferences on European integration. It prepares the ground for the empirical discussion presented in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 and for the comparative analysis offered in Chapter 6. The chapter considers the main research question and formulates the five hypotheses explored in this study. It then focuses on the methodological aspects by introducing the cases selected, by discussing data collection and by reviewing the methods used to test the hypotheses.

2.1. Research question and hypotheses

As discussed in the previous chapter, this thesis aims to explain *differentiated integration in the Nordic states* by focusing on government positions. Accordingly and as previously stated, the overarching question to be investigated is: **have Nordic government preferences on European integration been influenced by domestic political factors?**

In order to answer this main research question, a most similar systems research design is applied. This research strategy, based on the work of Mill's (1843) method of difference, is defined as the selection of "systems that are as similar as possible, except with regard to the phenomenon, the effects of which we are interested in assessing. The reason for choosing systems that are similar is the ambition to keep constant as many extraneous variables as possible" (Anckar 2008: 389; see also Przeworski and Teune 1970; Meckstroth 1975). As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the Nordic countries share a series of political characteristics, but nevertheless do not share the same experience in terms of European integration. This is not only because of different outcomes of the referendums on membership, but also because of different positions adopted by the governments. As a result, the use of a most similar systems design is relevant for the purpose of this study. Furthermore, such research design is often used in comparative Nordic studies (see e.g. Valen 1976; Jacobsson *et al.* 2004).

Several aspects of the relationship between the Nordic states (as a whole) and the European Union have been extensively discussed in the literature. Most of these studies

use a top-down approach when assessing the impact of Europeanisation on domestic politics (Svåsand and Lindstrøm 1996; Bergman and Damgaard 2000; Damgaard 2000; Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003; Dosenrode and Halkier 2004; Jacobsson *et al.* 2004; Lægneid *et al.* 2004; Bergman and Strøm 2011; Aylott *et al.* 2013). Other themes that have been developed in the literature are mass-level Euroscepticism (Miljan 1977; Archer 2000; Raunio 2007); corporatism (Ingebritsen 1998; see below); national identity (Hansen and Wæver 2002); or more general comparative studies (Miles 1995; 1996; Arter 1999; 2008; Heidar 2004b; Hilson 2008). The range of such studies thus demonstrates the relevance of comparing Nordic countries in the context of European integration. Nevertheless, studies with a particular focus on Nordic governments are rare or largely focus on a single aspect, such as the sectoral approach explored by Ingebritsen (1998). More broadly, there seems to be a lack of analysis related to *government* positions on *horizontal* European integration. Most scholars tend to analyse party positions on integration as a whole (Hix and Lord 1997; Hix 1999; Ray 1999; Marks and Wilson 2000; Hooghe *et al.* 2002; Marks and Steenbergen 2004; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008a), or focus on government positions on *vertical* integration (Aspinwall 2002; 2007; see below). In order to fill this gap in the literature, several Nordic variables (developed in section 1.2) are used as hypotheses to determine whether they influence governments' positions on (horizontal) European integration. Table 2.1 summarises the approach used in this thesis.

Table 2.1 Dependent and independent variables

Independent (Nordic) variables	Dependent variable
a. Relative strength of parties in parliament	Nordic governments' positions on European integration
b. Composition of government	
c. Type of government	
d. Government ideology	

A total of five hypotheses derive from the selected Nordic variables outlined above:

Relative strength of parties in parliament: the dominant party attitude towards European integration in parliament is expected to shape the government's position over this issue. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H1: If there is a majority of pro-European integration parties in the *parliament*, then the government will be in favour of deepening the country's relationship with the European Union.

Composition of government: the dominant party attitude towards European integration in the government is expected to shape the government's position over this issue. Accordingly:

H2: If there is a majority of pro-European integration parties in the *government*, then the government will be in favour of deepening the country's relationship with the European Union.

Type of government: the type of government (either minority or majority) is expected to shape the government's positions over this issue. This variable leads to two hypotheses:

H3: A minority government will avoid putting the issue of European integration on top of its agenda.

H4: A majority government will conversely adopt a stronger position on European integration.

*Government ideology:*¹² this variable draws on Hooghe *et al.*'s (2002) findings on party ideology and support for European integration, which suggests that non-centrist parties are more opposed to European co-operation than centrist parties are (see section 1.2). Aspinwall (2002: 106) explored this hypothesis with regards to *government* policy choices in the Council of Ministers and in Intergovernmental Conferences (i.e. in terms of *vertical* integration), and suggested that "centrist governments support integration whereas government composed of more extreme parties oppose it". But do these findings apply in the context of *horizontal* European integration? In order to answer this, the following hypothesis is considered:

H5: Government's support for European integration will decline as it moves further to either the left or the right.

The five hypotheses are all related to context specific domestic political issues which have been discussed in the previous chapter. Whereas the 'strong tradition of social democratic parties' is covered by hypotheses 1 and 2, the presence of socio-economic cleavages and

¹² Government ideology (or partisanship) is herein defined as the location of the government on the traditional left-right political spectrum (see section 2.5).

the high electoral volatility are not directly related to government positions regarding European integration. Indeed, these variables mostly affect voting behaviour and, to a lesser extent, the nature of the party system rather than shaping government preferences (see for instance Bjørklund 1996; Knutsen 2004; Aylott 2011). Furthermore, two additional variables have already been explored in the literature: the relevance of corporatism and the importance of national sovereignty for small states. According to Ingebritsen (1998: 10), a sectoral approach illustrates “how and why European integration mattered differently to each of the Nordic States”: for instance, she determined that Sweden joined the European Union because the capital-intensive manufacturing sector lobbied in favour of EU membership, while Norway did not join because its agriculture and fisheries would have been threatened by such a membership, and the oil sector guaranteed Norway a future outside the EU. This sectoral analysis offers interesting insights in order to explain integration and variation between the Nordic states. However, several criticisms have been raised, e.g., by Gstöhl (2005: 38): “in Norway [...] the interests tied to the most important industry, oil and gas, were inconsequential in the membership issue, while marginal sectors such as fishing and farming mattered”. It can also be added that the recent case of Iceland’s application for European Union membership seems to contradict this theory, as the leading fisheries sector did not support the government’s decision to apply for an EU membership in 2009. As this variable has already been discussed elsewhere, it is not included as a separate hypothesis in this analysis. Similarly, existing studies have emphasised the particular relationship between smaller states and supranational organisations. Indeed, as joining an organisation such as the European Union implies a loss of national sovereignty and a delegation of power to the supranational level, the importance of national independence and self-determination can determine Nordic government positions regarding European integration, as outlined in several studies (Liska 1968; Keohane 1969; Hansen and Wæver 2002).

Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that contextual factors played an important role in shaping the Nordic states’ relationship with the European Union. These factors can be internal (e.g. the principle of neutrality and/or military non-alignment) or external (e.g. geo-political constraints or specific relations with third states). Such features clearly matter, but their role is discussed elsewhere in the literature. This thesis is interested in the less studied domestic political factors outlined above. Nevertheless, each analytical

chapter will start by offering a comprehensive summary of contextual factors that have influenced the country's relationship with the European Union.

In order to answer the main research question and test the five hypotheses which have been developed in this section, this study uses a variety of research tools drawing on both qualitative and quantitative methods. The following sections will discuss the methodological aspects of this study.

2.2. Case selection

This study utilises three in-depth, case study analyses of Nordic states, based on a most similar systems research design. As the main research question investigates variation between Nordic states, the reasoning behind the choice of national case studies as research method seems evident.¹³ As discussed in the introduction, all five Nordic states have opted for different levels and forms of European integration. To illustrate this, Figure 2.1 maps each Nordic state's position towards the European Union.

Figure 2.1 'Circles' of differentiated European integration and positioning of the Nordic states



¹³ Burnham *et al.* (2004: 55) argued that “[c]arefully selected multiple cases will provide a much more robust test of a theory and can specify the conditions under which hypotheses and theories may or may not hold”.

As a full member of the European Union, Finland belongs to its ‘inner core’, where there is no differentiated integration. Denmark and Sweden, on the other hand, are members that have negotiated various types of opt-outs, and thus belong to the ‘outer core’, where internal differentiation occurs. Iceland and Norway form a third category and belong to the ‘inner periphery’. They can therefore be considered as ‘quasi members’, i.e. non-member states that have signed a range of agreements with the Union, which would provide evidence for external (and, in some cases, internal) differentiation. The ‘outer periphery’ is composed of the EU’s ‘neighbours’ who do not actively take part in the EU framework and never sought membership, but who nevertheless signed a series of bilateral agreements with the Union (e.g. countries belonging to the European Neighbourhood Policy).

For the purpose of this study, I decided to focus on three of the five Nordic states in particular: Norway, Sweden and Finland. Three reasons justify this selection. First, they all belong to different ‘circles’ of differentiated integration (see Figure 2.1). Second, all three states applied for membership in the early 1990s, while any similar concerns remained non-salient in Iceland until 2009. Third, Denmark joined the (then) European Community in 1972, at a time when the ‘earthquake elections’ took place in the Nordic states, while the EU remained a non-salient issue in Finland, Iceland and Sweden (Arter 2008). Accordingly, the analysis will focus on the events that occurred between 1990-1991 (when the issue became politically salient at the national level)¹⁴ and 2010. During these decades, the relationships between the three selected Nordic states and the EU changed drastically. Furthermore, as outlined in the previous chapter, differentiated integration in the European Union became an institutional reality from the 1990s onwards.

In order to break with the conventional membership/non-membership dichotomy and with regards to the concept of differentiated integration, five distinct government policies will be analysed:

- 1) application for European Union membership;
- 2) participation in the Schengen area;
- 3) participation in the European Economic Area;
- 4) participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union;

¹⁴ In the cases of Sweden and Norway, a brief description of the general elections held in the late 1980s (before the EU issue became salient) will be given.

5) and participation in the European Union Battle Groups [EUBG].

Such selection aims to offer a broad understanding of horizontal differentiated in the European Union. The following paragraphs give a brief historic overview of each policy and justify this selection.

Application for European Union membership

In all three of the selected cases, the issue of ‘membership’ became politically salient in the early 1990s. Norway had previously applied twice (see Chapter 5), whereas Sweden submitted its first application on 1 July 1991, followed by Finland on 18 March 1992. Norway subsequently submitted a new application for membership on 25 November 1992. Within the framework of this study, analysing government positions on EU membership from the early 1990s onwards will thus be relevant.

European Economic Area membership

In April 1984, the Luxembourg Declaration paved the way for closer co-operation between EFTA members and the then European Community (Lazowski 2006). The notion of ‘Espace économique européen’ (or European Economic Space) was discussed within the framework of this Declaration, building the premises of the future EEA. This project was characterised as “dynamic” and “homogeneous”, meaning that “the same legal rules should apply in all the participating countries and that the [European Economic Space] should develop in step with the Community” (Gstöhl 2002: 149). The ratification of the Single European Act in 1986 pushed non-EC countries to demand closer co-operation on economic issues. In 1988, all political parties represented in the Swedish Parliament were able to reach consensus on a common position, which stated that “Swedish citizens and Swedish companies should in no way be discriminated against” (Riksdag’s Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs 1988; quoted and translated in Gustavsson 1998: 60). This declaration paved the way for negotiations on what became the European Economic Area, with other EFTA governments (including Finland, Iceland and Norway) sharing the same views as Sweden. On 17 January 1989, President of the European Commission Jacques Delors presented his work plan for the newly appointed Commission to the European Parliament, setting up the future of EFTA-EC relations as one of the top priorities on the agenda (Lazowski 2006). Delors’ goal, commonly known as the ‘1992 project’, was to extend the four freedoms (goods, services, capital and

mobility) to EFTA member states (Emerson *et al.* 2002). In other words, this would mean extending the Single European Market to EFTA members. This proposition was warmly welcomed by all EFTA countries and negotiations officially started on 20 June 1990 (Lazowski 2006). Whereas the EEA negotiations proved difficult for the Nordic EFTA countries since it meant giving up a bigger part of their sovereignty, an agreement was eventually reached in 1992, and following ratification by their respective parliaments,¹⁵ the EEA came into force on 1 January 1994.¹⁶

Nowadays, the EEA can be considered as a ‘meta-agreement’ and covers about 75 per cent of European legislation.¹⁷ Yet it constitutes “the most prominent case of acquis export outside the enlargement paradigm” (Magen 2007: 377). Policies that are not included in the EEA are the EU’s external relations, the common agricultural, fisheries and transport policies, budget contributions and regional policy, taxation as well as the Economic and Monetary Union. As of 2014, besides all 28 EU member states, three ‘EU-outsiders’ are members of this economic area: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. The two other Nordic countries selected within the framework of this analysis, Finland and Sweden, were initially members the EEA, but eventually joined the European Union in 1995.

With regards to elite preferences on European integration, the distinction between EEA and EU membership has been outlined in the existing literature (Egeberg and Trondal 1999; Raunio and Wiberg 2000). However, such contributions did not discuss party and government positions on the EEA/EU: instead, they focus on individual MPs’ positions as well as administrative staff’s perceptions (in Norway). Furthermore, there is no data available for Finland. As such, analysing government positions on EEA membership will contribute to the existing literature on this issue.

Participation in the Schengen Area

The Schengen agreement falls within the scope of the European policy Area of Freedom, Security and Justice [AFSJ], formerly known as Justice and Home Affairs, which

¹⁵ Switzerland did not join the European Economic Area following the outcome of a popular referendum held in December 1992 on this issue (Kux and Sverdrup 2000).

¹⁶ On the functioning of the EEA, see e.g. Andersen (2000); Kux and Sverdrup (2000); Emerson *et al.* (2002); Gstöhl (2002); Eliassen and Sitter (2003); Eriksen (2011).

¹⁷ As of 2010, a total of 4182 legislative acts applied to Norway through the EEA, which demonstrates the complexity and the diversity of the agreement (Norges offentlige utredninger 2012).

constituted the third pillar of the European Union prior to the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. The Schengen agreement was implemented in all five Nordic states on 25 March 2001. This agreement is an example of both internal and external differentiation, as some member states opted out while some ‘EU outsiders’, including Iceland and Norway, opted in. It should be noted that these countries have co-operated in this policy area since 1958, with the implementation of the Nordic Passport Union. Considered as the precursor of the Schengen Area, this Union between Denmark (including the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden removed internal border checks for citizens of these countries. In practice, this means that Nordic citizens can work and reside in any Nordic state without the need of a work and/or residence permit. Joining Schengen has been analysed as a mean to secure the future of Nordic co-operation in this policy area (Eiriksson 2004; Archer 2005). As this agreement constitutes one of the key policies of the AFSJ in which all Nordic states (including the two ‘EU-outsiders’) participate, it has been selected for analysis.

*Participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union*¹⁸

As a non-member of the European Union, participation in the EMU is not relevant to Norway’s experience of (differentiated) integration: the EMU constitutes a policy area in which only internal differentiation takes place. However, it is interesting to analyse the difference between the Finnish and Swedish cases: in the late 1990s, the Finnish government committed to join first wave entrants in the Eurozone, while its Swedish peer opposed such policy (see Chapters 3 and 4). In 2003, the government of Sweden campaigned in favour of introducing the Euro but the electorate rejected this proposal in a referendum. As of 2014, Sweden has yet to adopt the Euro despite being legally bound to join the third and final stage of the EMU. Analysing the variance in government positions regarding participation in this third stage of the EMU is thus pertinent.

Participation in the European Union Battle Groups

The Common Foreign and Security Policy area covers a wide range of agreements at the European level. Despite being a non-member of the EU, Norway nevertheless participates in some of these policies. One of these is the European Union Battle Group

¹⁸ Within the framework of this analysis, ‘participation in the Eurozone’, ‘EMU membership’ and ‘adopting the Euro’ are considered as synonyms of ‘participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union’.

concept. Established in 2004 and implemented for the first time in 2007, an EUBG is “a combined arms battalion-size force package with accompanying combat support and logistics units ready for rapid deployment to almost anywhere around the world” (Andersson 2006: 22). EUBGs operate under a United Nations mandate and are available on stand-by rotation for a period of six months during which they should be ready to deploy within a few days’ notice. Moreover, EUBGs are “capable of managing a full range of tasks from humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping missions to high intensity combat operations” (ibid.). Participation is based on voluntary co-operation. In other words, states decide whether to participate in such groups or not, which would imply a certain degree of horizontal differentiated integration. One of these forces is the Nordic Battle Group [NBG], which operated for the first time in the first half of 2008 and a second time in the first half of 2011. Seven countries participate in this NBG: Sweden (operating as framework nation), Finland, Norway, Estonia, Ireland, and from 2015 onwards, Latvia and Lithuania. In addition, Finland participated in the EU Battle Group 107 between January and June 2007 together with Germany and the Netherlands. Participation in EUBGs is of particular political significance, as it consists of making troops available to EU-led operations. Such policy seems thus particularly relevant to study government positions on participation in the CFSP policy area.

In a nutshell, these five policies cover a range of areas in which various forms of horizontal differentiated integration take place and, as such, it goes beyond the EU/EEA membership dichotomy, as the latter agreement does not cover politicised areas such as the AFSJ, the CFSP and the EMU. Furthermore, policy areas where differentiation does *not* take place, such as the Common Agricultural Policy or the Common Fisheries Policy, will not be covered in this analysis.

In order to address the thesis’ key research question and test the hypotheses, one must first answer two methodological questions. First, how do we measure government and party positions on European integration? Second, how do we measure ‘government ideology’? The following sections of this methodological chapter will discuss both of these questions.

2.3. Data collection

Analysing government positions and ideology first requires one to examine the political parties themselves, since “[t]he idea that the policies of governments are affected by the policies of the parties that comprise them is at the heart of the theory of representative democracy” (Budge and Laver 1993: 499) and as “government partisanship reflects party positions and the power distributions amongst the parties in power” (Kim and Fording 2002: 187). In addition, the hypotheses explored in this study also reflect on party attitudes on European integration, especially with regards to hypothesis 1 (on the composition of parliament) and hypothesis 2 (on the composition of government). Hence, the focus is first set on party positions and party ideology, before moving on towards government stances and partisanship.

Three types of data sources are used. First, the *academic literature* on the Nordic states is extensive and offers a goldmine of data. The descriptive elements offered in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are mostly based on this academic literature. Second, in order to assess parties’ and governments’ positions on Europe, three kinds of *official documents* have been analysed: party manifestos for all well-established parties¹⁹ that took part in the general elections between 1990 and 2010; statements of government policies presented before national parliaments when cabinets were formed; and parliamentary voting records for each policy selected (see previous section). These official sources offer an accurate way to identify party and government priorities regarding European integration. As most of these documents are only available in the national language, most of them have been translated with the help of native Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian speakers. Third, in order to triangulate the data stemming from the official documents, a total of 26 *semi-structured interviews* have been conducted with political elites. At least one MP or official representative (i.e. policy adviser or spokesperson, including party leaders and secretaries) for most well-established national party has been interviewed. Each interviewee was asked neutral questions on the three following themes: the history and ideology of ‘their’ political party; the party’s position regarding European integration; and how integration was broadly perceived in their country. While discussions were recorded with the consent of interviewees, a summary of the key statements used in this analysis were transcribed

¹⁹ In this study, a party is considered as ‘well-established’ in the national party system if it has been successful in gaining parliamentary seats in two consecutive general elections.

and sent for approval. In all cases, no changes were requested nor suggested. Where appropriate, interview quotes are used to support statements on party positions on European integration. More information on the interviews conducted and the selection process are given in Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4.

In short, government and party positions on European integration were assessed by invoking existing academic literature, official documents, and elite interviews.

2.4. Explaining party and government support for European integration: a new conceptual framework

As discussed in the previous section, assessing government positions on European integration first requires focus on the *party* level. In order to understand these party preferences, this section draws on the literature on party-based *Euroscepticism*.

The notion of Euroscepticism is herein used as the starting point for the analysis of party and government preferences on Europe and encompasses the idea of “contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration” (Taggart 1998: 366). Since the late 1990s, studies of party-based Euroscepticism have flourished. Amongst these, three approaches stand out. This section explores this existing framework, and will then justify the use of a *hybrid* approach to conceptualise party and government preferences on Europe. Beforehand, however, it is important to bear in mind that this thesis does not aim to complicate the existing literature by offering a new categorisation of Euroscepticism or elite preferences on European integration. Instead, I suggest a deconstruction of the extent of party and government support (or opposition) to European integration per policy area where differentiation can, and has, taken place.

Existing framework

In an early attempt to categorise Euroscepticism and based on the aforementioned definition, Taggart and Szczerbiak (2001) made a distinction between *hard* and *soft* Euroscepticism. In their words:

Hard Euroscepticism is where there is a principled objection to the EU and European integration and therefore can be seen in parties who think that their countries should withdraw from membership, or whose policies towards the EU are tantamount to being opposed to the whole project of European integration as it is currently conceived.

Whereas

Soft Euroscepticism is where there is *not* a principled objection to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of policy areas lead to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU, or where there is a sense that ‘national interest’ is currently at odds with the EU’s trajectory (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008b: 7-8).

This distinction between hard and soft Euroscepticism offers a valuable tool for separating out those parties that are strongly opposed to European integration (i.e. ‘hard Eurosceptics’) and those that show signs of contingent opposition (i.e. ‘soft Eurosceptics’), “with attitude towards a country’s membership of the EU being viewed as the ultimate litmus test of whether one fell into the first or second camp” (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008c: 240).

This approach has however been criticised by scholars in the field. Kopecký and Mudde (2002), e.g., have argued that the definition of soft Euroscepticism is too broad, and it is therefore difficult to classify political parties as either hard or soft Eurosceptics (see also Mudde 2012). They have subsequently suggested a new typology which takes into account two dimensions: ‘support for European integration’ (divided between ‘Europhiles’ and ‘Europhobes’) and ‘support for the European Union’ (divided between ‘EU-optimists’ and ‘EU-pessimists’). Drawing on these dimensions, the authors developed four ideal-type categories of party positions on Europe:

- Euroenthusiasts: parties supporting the general ideas of European integration and believing that the European Union is or will soon become the institutionalisation of these ideas (e.g. parties defending a strong Europe or a federal vision of Europe);
- Eurosceptics: parties supporting the general ideas of European integration, but that are pessimistic about the European Union’s current and/or future reflection of these ideas (e.g. parties defending an intergovernmental vision of Europe with more powers for national institutions);

- Eurorejects: parties subscribing neither to the ideas underlying the process of European integration, nor to the European Union (e.g. parties defending a Europe of independent states);
- Europragmatists: parties not supporting nor opposing the general ideas of European integration, but supporting the European Union (e.g. parties not having affirm ideological opinion on European integration, but “assessing the EU positively as they deem it profitable for their own country”; Kopecký and Mudde 2002: 303).

Even though this conceptualisation is analytically useful and can be considered as more specific than Taggart and Szczerbiak’s,²⁰ it has also been criticised for its lack of accuracy and terminological problems. As stated by Henderson (2008: 118), “[t]he major weakness in the argument is one of imprecise definitions. What their analysis lacks is a systematic statement of the substantive attitudes towards European integration which divide Europhobia from Europhilia. The dividing line which parties do not cross is not explicitly defined” (see also Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008c). Furthermore, it does not take into account party preferences towards *horizontal* differentiated European integration, which is the main focus of this thesis. As such, a pro-CFSP, but anti-EMU, party would thus be difficult to place into either of these categories.

Another major contribution to the study of party preferences on European integration has been developed by the so-called Chapel Hill School²¹ and has inspired the approach used in the present study. In an analysis of party positions on Europe, Ray (1999) asked experts to evaluate party stances on a seven-point scale: strongly opposed (score 1), opposed (2), somewhat opposed (3), neutral or no stance on the issue (4), somewhat in favour (5), in favour (6), and strongly in favour (7). This offers a more nuanced interpretation of party support for European integration than the crude distinctions between pro- and anti-EU or European integration as a whole. Hooghe *et al.* (2002) conducted a similar expert survey and asked a set of questions that disaggregated (vertical)

²⁰ Taggart and Szczerbiak (2008c: 242) accepted Kopecký and Mudde’s critiques: “[w]e accept that our definition of Soft party-based Euroscepticism may, indeed, have been too broad and included parties that were in essence pro-European integration. [...] In particular, we accept the weakness of using attitudes towards EU membership as the key definitional variable separating different party positions towards Europe”.

²¹ The term ‘Chapel Hill School’ has been used by Aspinwall (2007). Mudde (2012), on the other hand, uses ‘North Carolina School’.

European integration into component policies.²² As such, the authors were able to determine a party's support for European integration and how it varied per policy area.

Hybrid framework

The conceptual framework used herein can be considered as a hybrid version of the above ones, and takes into account the criticisms that have been raised. The method adopted is inspired from Hooghe *et al.*'s approach as party support for (horizontal) European integration is divided into five key EU policies or policy areas: EEA membership; EU membership; participation in AFSJ policies; participation in CFSP policies; and participation in the EMU. These are the reflection of the five government policies selected and discussed in section 2.2, and cover areas where horizontal differentiated integration has taken place. It includes EU membership, which is ultimately used by Taggart and Szczerbiak to distinguish the hard Eurosceptics from the softer ones, as well as EEA membership as an alternative to participation in the Union. It also draws on Kopecký and Mudde's categorisation as it includes aspects relating to party support for European *integration* (beyond support for the European Union) in three policy areas where differentiation occurs (i.e. CFSP, AFSJ and EMU). Nevertheless, the aim of this framework is not to categorise party-based Euroscepticism as such as this is likely to lead to further semantic confusion. The intention is rather to offer a more accurate measurement tool to capture preferences on European co-operation in the three Nordic states and in the policies where differentiated integration has taken place. As such, it will be demonstrated that 'party support for European integration' varies in the selected policy areas.

Based on the academic literature, party manifestos and elite interviews, party support for integration in the aforementioned policy areas is measured on a scale running from ++ to --, as described in Table 2.2. Such table is used to summarise party preferences on European integration in the three country case studies developed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

²² The EU policies selected by Hooghe *et al.* (2002: 967) are: "EU environmental policy, EU cohesion policy, EU asylum policy, EU employment policy, EU fiscal policy, EU foreign policy, and expanding the European Parliament's power".

Table 2.2. Conceptualisation of party preferences on European integration

	Policy area a	Policy area b	Policy area c
Party a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ++ means that the official party line stands in favour of participation in the policy area, and that there are no internal party divisions on this issue; • + means that the official party line stands in favour of participation in the policy area, but that there are internal party divisions on this issue; • 0 means that the party does not adopt an official position on participation in the policy area, or remains neutral on this issue; • - means that the official party line is opposed to participation in the policy area, but that there are internal party divisions on this issue; • -- means that the official party line is opposed to participation in the policy area, and that there are no internal party divisions on this issue. 		
Party b			
Party c			

The thesis ultimately aims to analyse government preferences on European integration. Hence, a similar scale is used to measure such positions and is used as a tool to compare the different Nordic governments (see Chapter 6 for the comparative analysis):

- ++ means that the government as a whole is in favour of integration in this policy area;
- + means that the government's official position is in favour of integration in this policy area, but that there are some divisions amongst ministers;
- 0 means that the government does not have an official position on this policy area, or remains neutral on this issue;

- - means that the government's official position is against integration in this policy area (thus promoting differentiated integration), but that there are some divisions amongst ministers;
- -- means that that the government as a whole is against integration in this policy area (thus promoting differentiated integration);
- N/A means that a policy area or issue was not politically salient at that time.

Such a scale presents a series of advantages. First, it constitutes a solid basis to compare party and government positions in the three case countries, thus paving the way for a subsequent comparative analysis. Second, it takes into account the internal divisions that are likely to prevail, the smaller intra-party factions that do not necessarily share the views of the official line, as well as coalition governments which may include a diverse set of parties with diverging preferences. Third, with regards to hypothesis 1 (on the relative strength of parties in parliament) and hypothesis 2 (on the composition of government), the method adopted herein will offer a comprehensive and more accurate way to determine whether parties are pro- or anti-integrationists in specific policy areas.

However, this approach also raises certain questions and displays some limitations. For instance, by deconstructing support and opposition in specific policy areas, it can be interpreted as a way to further complicate the broader picture. Hence, as outlined by Taggart and Szczerbiak (2008c: 249): "how many extensions of sovereignty must a party oppose before it can be categorized as Eurosceptic?" This is why such categorisations will not be made in this thesis. Instead, and bearing in mind that some parties (and governments) are strongly divided on European issues, the method used will be more specific than the existing classification schemes are. Hence, in this analysis, parties and government will not be considered as 'Eurosceptics' or 'Europhiles', but as pro-integrationists, anti-integrationists or divided on participation in the aforementioned aspects/policies of European integration.

2.5. Measuring government ideology

The fifth hypothesis explored in this study states that a government's support for European integration will decline as it moves further to either the left or the right. In order to test this hypothesis, one must first determine how to measure government ideology.

This section explores the methods used to determine government positions on the traditional left-right scale. It first focuses on party ideology, and offers a review of the various techniques used in the existing literature, before moving on to discuss government ideology measurements.

Measuring party positions on the left-right scale

In order to study party (and government) ideology within the context of European integration, Hooghe *et al.* (2002) determined that two dimensional considerations of ideology can be considered: the basic left/right dimension and the 'new politics' dimension. The former dimension is divided into three models:

- The regulation model, according to which "European politics is fused to the basic domestic competition between the Left, which pushes for common economic regulation across Europe, and the Right, which favors less regulation";
- The Hix-Lord model (based on Hix and Lord 1997), according to which "party positioning on domestic issues and party positioning on European issues are orthogonal to each other";
- And the Hooghe-Marks model, according to which "the Center-Left supports European integration in cohesion policy, social policy, unemployment policy, environmental regulation, and upgrading the European Parliament, whereas the Right supports market integration but opposes European reregulation" (Hooghe *et al.* 2002: 917-972).

In addition to the third model, the authors have introduced a “new politics” dimension to explain party positioning on the issues that arise from European integration, ranging from Green/Alternative/Libertarian (or GAL) to Traditional/Authoritarian/Nationalist (TAN). According to their study, “this dimension is the most general and powerful predictor of party positioning on the issues that arise from European integration” (ibid.: 966). The present study, however, puts the emphasis on the traditional left/right dimension, linked to developments at the domestic level. The existence of this second dimension explored by Hooghe et al. should nevertheless be borne in mind, as it constitutes an important part of the literature on European integration.

The literature acknowledges three methods for measuring party ideology (Castles and Mair 1984; Budge *et al.* 1987; Laver and Hunt 1992; Laver and Schofield 1998; Kim and Fording 2002; Aspinwall 2007). The first one is *expert judgements*, which involves asking (mostly country) experts to locate parties in the left-right space;²³ the second, which is used in the second part of this thesis to determine party positions on European integration per policy area, is *analysis of party documents*;²⁴ and the third one is *mass public opinion survey*, consisting of analysing the results of large-scale surveys, such as the Eurobarometer surveys.²⁵ The advantages and shortcomings of each method have been extensively discussed in the literature (see e.g. Laver and Schofield 1998; Ray 1999; Budge *et al.* 2001; Franzmann and Kaiser 2006; Aspinwall 2007).

Based on a broad expert survey, Castles and Mair (1984), and later Huber and Inglehart (1995), assessed party space and party locations in 42 societies including Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. In 1999, the Chapel Hill School conducted a similar survey (Hooghe *et al.* 2002; Marks and Steenbergen 2004); however, this dataset only focused on the member states, and thus excluded Norway. As a consequence, the latter dataset is incomplete for the purpose of this thesis. In addition, Huber and Inglehart’s survey was conducted at the beginning of the period analysed (1993) and the data do not enable us to trace the evolution of party ideology over time. Finally, such methods can also be considered as rather subjective as they mostly rely on the prior

²³ This method is used and developed, e.g., in de Swaan (1973); Taylor and Laver (1973); Dodd (1976); Castles and Mair (1984); Huber and Inglehart (1995); Marks and Steenbergen (2004).

²⁴ See e.g. Budge *et al.* (1987); Laver and Budge (1992); Budge *et al.* (2001).

²⁵ See e.g. Inglehart and Klingemann (1976); Sani and Sartori (1983); Hix and Lord (1997).

knowledge of the experts (Laver and Garry 2000). For these reasons, the expert surveys are not used.

Several large scale opinion surveys have been regularly conducted in the Nordic states. Gilljam and Oscarsson (1996), e.g., assessed the evolution of voters' perception of party locations between 1979 and 1991, and Grendstad (2003) then conducted a similar survey in 1999. In this study, the use of this method has also been dismissed for two main reasons. First, datasets for the whole period analysed in this thesis are not provided for in the literature. Second, mass public opinion surveys do not reflect actual party positions on the left-right scale, but rather the population's *perception* of party positions.

In their detailed Comparative Manifesto Project [CMP], Budge *et al.* (2001) and then Klingemann *et al.* (2006) have also analysed Nordic policy preferences.²⁶ A total of 55 countries are included in this database, including all five Nordic states. Using a methodology based on Kim and Fording (1998; 2002), Klingemann *et al.* (2006: 5) have codified party positions on a scale from -100 to +100: “negative scores represent left positions and positive scores represent right positions. [...] At the extreme (never in practice attained) a party devoting its entire programme to left-wing issues would score -100: similarly a totally right-wing programme would score +100”. In order to determine party score on this CMP scale, a total of 56 categories were coded in the manifesto project; out of these categories, 26 were selected as capturing ideological tendencies (see Table 2.3); for each party manifesto, the percentage of all statements comprised by each category is calculated; finally, in order to determine the party score on the -100/+100 CMP scale, the left content from the right content of the manifesto is subtracted.

²⁶ An updated database is available on the CMP website: <https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/>

Table 2.3 Categories from the Comparative Manifesto Project capturing ideological tendencies

Right-wing categories	Left-wing categories
Military: Positive	Decolonisation, Anti-imperialism
Freedom, Human Rights	Military: Negative
Constitutionalism: Positive	Peace
Political Authority	Internationalism: Positive
Free Enterprise	Democracy
Economic Incentives	Regulate Capitalism, Market
Protectionism: Negative	Economic Planning
Economic Orthodoxy	Protectionism: Positive
Social Services Limitation	Controlled Economy
National Way of Life: Positive	Nationalisation
Traditional Morality: Positive	Social Services: Expansion
Law and Order	Education: Expansion
Social Harmony	Labour Groups: Positive

Source: Klingemann *et al.* (2006)

Such data is available for Finland, Sweden and Norway throughout the period analysed, and for each general election year. This information also enables researchers to trace the evolution of party ideologies over time: for instance, some right-wing parties could present a more left-oriented manifesto depending on the evolving domestic context. Moreover, such analysis is more accurate than the two aforementioned methods, as it directly relies on primary sources, i.e. party manifestos, which are also used in this study to determine party positions on European integration per policy area. As a result, party positions on the left-right scale are measured by using this method.

Nevertheless, some shortcomings of this method have been outlined in the literature. Lowe *et al.* (2011), Benoit *et al.* (2012) and Geminis (2012) discussed its ‘centrist bias’: in their views, the saliency approach (i.e. dividing the difference of ‘right’- and ‘left’-coded content by the total number of text units) by necessity push towards the middle ground. This is due to the fact that “[t]he denominator will increase whenever the number of total text units increases, moving the resulting scale position closer to zero, even when the new text units are not in any way related to the scale in question” (Benoit *et al.* 2012: 606). Furthermore, according to Benoit and Laver (2006: 68), the left-right scale used in the Comparative Manifesto Project is “out of date”, and they illustrate this by examining party positions on environmental issues: “[i]f a party in the CMP dataset starts talking more about the environment and less about other content categories in the CMP left-right scale, then it will appear to be becoming more centrist”. Despite these criticisms, the CMP

database and method used to determine party positioning on the left-right scale is seen as the most appropriate one for the purpose of this study.

Measuring government positions on the left-right scale

Kim and Fording (2002) offered a review of the methods used to assess *government partisanship*. The first one is directly linked to election results, and takes into account the total amount of votes received by left- and right-wing parties. For instance, Cameron (1978: 1248) “summed the votes received in the previous national legislative election by all parties participating in the government (i.e. holding cabinet positions) and divided the total into the number of votes received by all Social Democratic, Socialist, Labor, Communist and smaller leftist parties that were participants in government”. This way of calculating government partisanship was mostly used in the 1970s. The second, developed in the mid-1980s, consists of calculating the percentage of ministries held by left- or right-wing parties (Cameron 1984; Jackman 1987; Lange and Garrett 1987; Hicks 1988; Korpi 1989; Alvarez *et al.* 1991). The third uses “the proportion of cabinet seats held by parties of the left minus the proportion of cabinet seats held by parties of the right” (Kim and Fording 2002: 189; see also Blais *et al.* 1996). While these three conceptualisations offer a clear distinction between the ‘left’ and the ‘right’, they cannot capture the *intensity* of ideology. In other words, they do not take into account the fact that some leftist (or rightist) parties will be more left- or right-oriented than others. In consequence, “these measures of government ideology based on dichotomous measures of party ideology are likely subject to significant measurement error” (Kim and Fording 2002: 189). As an alternative to these flawed methods and based on the Comparative Manifesto Project’s database, Kim and Fording (*ibid.*) suggested an equation to calculate government ideology:

$$\sum \{Ideology_i * (\#Posts_i / Total Posts)\}$$

Where:

- #Posts_{*i*} = the total number of cabinet posts controlled by party *i*;
- Ideology_{*i*}* = the ideology of party *I* (i.e. the value on the CMP scale); and
- Total Posts* = the total number of posts (or ministerial portfolios).

Such a method would enable researchers to properly quantify government positions on the left-right scale. The results will fluctuate on the CMP scale, from -100 to +100, though such extremes are never in practice attained. In order to assess government partisanship with regards to hypothesis 5 (i.e. *government support for European integration will decline as governments move further to either the left or right*), three general categories are suggested:

- Left-wing governments are governments whose ideology is comprised between -100 and -11 on the CMP scale;
- Centrist (or centre-oriented) governments are governments whose ideology is comprised between -10 and +10 on the CMP scale;
- Right-wing governments are governments whose ideology is comprised between +11 and +100 on the CMP scale.

Such categories offer a balanced distinction between left-wing, centrist and right-wing governments. Taking into consideration the fact that party ideology in practice fluctuates between -50 and +50 (see e.g. Klingemann *et al.* 2006), it is considered that centrist values fluctuate between -10 and +10. Within the framework of this analysis, partisanship has been calculated for each government in each case country between 1990 and 2010. This data is available in Appendix 5.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the design and methodology of the research presented in this thesis. It has justified the use of a most similar systems research design and formulated five hypotheses stemming from the 'Nordic variables' discussed in the previous chapter. It has argued that whereas internal and external contextual factors have been discussed elsewhere, this work focuses on four domestic political factors: composition of parliament, composition of government, type and ideology of government. As such, this study aims at determining whether these domestic factors affect government positions on European integration.

This chapter has also introduced the research methods used to answer the main research question. It has justified the case selection and the use of three in-depth country case studies (i.e. Finland, Sweden and Norway) with a particular focus on five key policies

where differentiated integration takes place (i.e. EEA membership, EU membership, participation in Schengen, participation in the third stage of the EMU and participation in EUBGs).

The following three chapters will offer in-depth empirical analyses for the three selected country case studies. Chapter 3 will focus on Finland, which belongs to the ‘inner core’ of the European Union. Chapter 4 will analyse Sweden, which is located in the ‘outer core’. Finally, the fifth chapter will investigate Norway as country located in the ‘inner periphery’ of the EU. Each of these empirical chapters concludes with a section connecting the empirical findings to the five hypotheses explored. Chapter 6 will then offer a comparative analysis of the three case studies: in this chapter, the hypotheses formulated will either be accepted or rejected.

Chapter 3. Finland

3.1. Relations between Finland and the European Union: from ‘belated European’ to proactive member state

As of 2014, Finland’s relationship with the European Union is rather simple to draw. Indeed, as a full member since 1995, Finland belongs to the ‘inner core’ of the EU (see Figure 2.1). Furthermore, and unlike its Nordic neighbours, Finland is a full member of the Eurozone. However, this relationship has been historically challenged, mostly because of Finland’s geopolitical location between Europe and Russia (Arter 1999; Aylott *et al.* 2013). The aim of this section is to give a brief historical analysis of the evolution of Finland’s relationship with the European Union, from EFTA membership to joining the Eurozone.

Box 3.1 Timeline: Finland’s major steps towards integration

Date	Agreement
1961	Associate membership, European Free Trade Association
1973	Free trade agreement with the European Economic Community
1986	Full membership, European Free Trade Association
1989	Membership, Council of Europe
1992	Application for European Union Membership
1994	Membership, European Economic Area
1995	Membership, European Union
1996	Membership, Schengen Area (implemented in 2001, jointly with the other Nordic states)
1999	Joining the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union
2007	Participation in the EU Battle Group 107 (ready for operations between January and June)
2008	Participation in the Nordic Battle Group (ready for operations between January and June)
2011	Participation in the Nordic Battle Group (ready for operations between January and June)

As an ally to Germany during the Second World War, Finland had to accept terms of peace mentioned in the Paris Peace Treaties of 1947. As a consequence of those terms, Finland’s geopolitical position between East and West “led into a special relationship with the Soviet Union” (Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003: 22), meaning that the country had to take account of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [USSR]’s interests in terms of

foreign policy. In order to compensate for this ‘special relationship’, the policy of neutrality has been introduced in the 1950s, and has been broadly accepted by the Finnish political elite. This neutrality could be perceived in the range of agreements signed by Finland and Western Europe between the 1950s and the late 1980s, becoming for instance a full EFTA member in 1986, twenty-six years after its foundation, and becoming the last Nordic state to join the association (see Box 3.1). For these reasons, Finland is often considered as a “belated European” (Arter 1995a: 364). Furthermore, due to this policy of neutrality, Finland did not join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation [NATO].

When discussions over the future European Economic Area arose in 1989, Finland welcomed this opportunity and political elites did not see it as a threat to the policy of neutrality. On the contrary, the economic incentives of EEA membership led to a large political consensus. Such membership was perceived compatible with Finland’s foreign affairs, especially since this policy area as well as agriculture and regional policies were not included in the agreement (Väyrynen 1993; Tiilikainen 1996).

Due to Finland’s neutrality and relationship with the USSR, it could have been expected that an EU membership would have become conceivable following the Revolutions of 1989 and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, which precipitated the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Pesonen and Riihinen 2002). However, in practice, these events barely influenced Finland’s decision to apply. Instead, and besides domestic economic difficulties common to all Nordic countries in the early 1990s,²⁷ Sweden’s intention to apply for membership in October 1990 (see further Chapter 4) constituted the main event leading to discussions on the European issue in Finland. The membership option, nonetheless, was not raised during the 1991 general election campaign. The Finnish government eventually applied for a membership in March 1992 (Sundberg 1992; Törnudd 1996; Mayes and Suvanto 2002; Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003; see also section 3.3.1). In other words, Nordic influence shaped the Finnish government’s decision to apply for joining the EU. Similarly to Austria, Norway and Sweden, negotiations with the European Commission were facilitated by the recent EEA accession negotiations, covering about 75 per cent of the whole *acquis communautaire*. As a result, and despite minor difficulties on issues mostly related to the agricultural sector (Kivimäki 1997), accession talks were concluded in one year and the agreement included the whole

²⁷ On these economic difficulties, see Pesonen (1994); Arter (1995a); Aylott *et al.* (2013).

range of policy areas covered by the EU, without any opt-outs. A referendum on the accession treaty was then organised on 16 October 1994, and the Finnish population voted in favour of EU membership with a majority of 56.9 per cent.²⁸

Following its accession, several observers expected that Finland would behave as a 'reluctant European' (in the words of Miljan 1977) by not pursuing an active European policy and fighting against the processes of deepening and widening European integration (Arter 1995a; Miles 1995). Furthermore, the principle of neutrality was seen as problematic, especially in terms of participation in a common foreign and security policy. Unlike its Nordic neighbours, however, Finland decided not only to be part of the inner core of the EU, but also to play an active role in Brussels by initiating policies. Four contextual factors explain this strong national involvement.

First, while it was expected that Finland's neutrality would be an obstacle to full participation in the CFSP, the Finnish government declared that such principle was compatible with this European policy (Ingebritsen and Larson 1997; Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003). Progressively, official political discourses replaced the notion of 'neutrality' by 'military non-alignment', which now constitutes the hard core of Finland's foreign policy (Törnudd 1996). However and despite some debates over this issue in the early 1990s, NATO membership has always been considered as infringing upon the principle of military non-alignment.

Second, by seeking membership, Finland intended to use the European Union as a tool to exert and extend its influence amongst the Nordic states and, to a broader extent, in Western Europe. Indeed, while Finland was constrained by its 'special relationship' with the Soviet Union until the late 1980s, other states founded transnational consultative committees such as the Barents Euro-Arctic Regional Council (initiated by Norway) and the Council of Baltic Sea States (initiated jointly by Denmark and Germany). In order to break with the country's reputation of 'belated European', the Finnish authorities decided to play a proactive role at the European level from early 1995 onwards. Accordingly, the Finnish government launched the Northern Dimension Initiative in 1997, which aims to

²⁸ For constitutional reasons, a separate referendum was held in the Åland islands on 20 October 1994. 73.6 per cent of the population voted in favour of joining the EU.

improve co-operation between the European Union and various regional organisations from Northern Europe (Arter 2000a).

Third, Finland's geopolitical position and identity as frontier state reinforced the willingness to play an active role in the European integration process, as well as to promote the democratisation of the Eastern region. Indeed, as mentioned above, Finland is located on the edge between East and West, and thus the government wanted the state to play a significant role in the new post-Cold War Europe, particularly in terms of communications between Russia and the EU. Accordingly, by joining the European Union, one of Finland's initial goal was to convince Brussels to "assist the Russian economy, and to promote democratic institution-building in Russia and the Baltic states" (Ingebritsen and Larson 1997: 211).

Fourth, especially during the first years that followed membership, Finland's economy had recovered from a severe crisis that hit the country in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This offered incentives to deepen European integration and, in particular, to join the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union in 1999 (Mayes and Suvanto 2002). Even though all Nordic countries suffered from economic crises during this period, the Finnish case was the most striking one due to its dependence on the Soviet Union.

These contextual factors contribute to explain why Finnish governments have opted for such a proactive role at the European level from 1995 onwards, to eventually become the most integrated Nordic country. In this study, the emphasis is set on domestic political variables (i.e. the relative strength of parties in parliament, the composition and type of government, as well as its ideology) in order to provide a clear and concise comparative analysis. The next section will now explore the Finnish political system within the context of European integration, and will give an overview of each well-established political party's position on this issue.

3.2. The Finnish Party System and European Integration

Unlike its Nordic neighbours (Denmark, Norway and Sweden) but as Iceland, Finland is a republic. The head of state is a democratically elected president for a renewable six-year mandate (since 1994). In the past decades, the Finnish political system has evolved from semi-presidentialism (with dual leadership shared by the president and the prime minister)

to a (nearly)²⁹ parliamentary system of government following a constitutional reform introduced in March 2000 (Nousiainen 2001). Whereas the powers of the president were relatively strong until the end of the 1990s (Anckar 2000), the new constitution has empowered the Finnish national parliament (the Eduskunta), leaving the president with mostly representative and symbolic competences.³⁰ Four reasons have been raised in order to justify these constitutional changes. First, the collapse of the Soviet Union has led to major changes in the nature of Finland's foreign policy, and to a depersonalisation of this policy field. Second, (majority) coalition governments became increasingly stable from the 1980s onwards, reducing the need for presidential intervention in day-to-day politics. Third, the strong presidential role played by Urho Kekkonen, President of Finland between 1956 and 1982, did not please political parties who called for constitutional reforms to restrict presidential competences as early as the 1980s. Finally, Finland's membership in the European Union has changed the nature of foreign affairs, implying the need for the government to play a more proactive role in foreign policy and to increase parliamentary accountability (Paloheimo 2003).

Nevertheless, it appears that the role of the prime minister (and, more generally, of the government) in foreign policy has been decisive prior to the constitutional reform of 2000, including when the Finnish government decided to apply for an EU membership. Indeed, the initiative came from Prime Minister Esko Aho, and not from the president's office (see further section 3.3.1). Furthermore, all Finnish interviewees mentioned that since Finland's intention to join the European Economic Area in the early 1990s, the prime minister has taken the lead in shaping the governments' positions on European integration. Therefore and for the sake of comparative research, the role and position of the president in terms of shaping Finland's relationship with the European Union will not be analysed for this study, as the main research question focuses on *government* positions.

The analysis of the Finnish case starts with the parliamentary election of 1991, as the European issue became salient during this election campaign. Since then, a total of eight parties have been successful in securing seats in the Eduskunta. These parties are: the conservative National Coalition Party (*Kansallinen Kokoomus*, KOK); the Social Democratic

²⁹ The Finnish political system still shows minor features of semi-presidentialism, such as the right for the president to appoint some top civil servants (Nousiainen 2001; Paloheimo 2003).

³⁰ For a detailed evolution of the prerogatives of parliament, government and president in the Finnish constitution, see Paloheimo (2003).

Party (*Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue*, SDP); the agrarian Centre Party (*Keskusta*, KESK); the liberal Swedish People’s Party (*Suomen ruotsalainen kansanpuolue*, or in Swedish *Svenska folkpartiet i Finland*, RKP); the Christian Democrats (*Kristillisdemokraatit*, KD, formerly named Christian Union, *Suomen Kristillinen Liitto*, until 2001); three ‘new politics’ parties, the Left Alliance (*Vasemmistoliitto*, VAS), belonging to the socialist left party family; the Green League (*Vihreä Liitto*, VIHR, also sometimes referred to as Green Association); and the populist right Finns Party (*Perussuomalaiset*, PS; formerly translated in English as ‘True Finns’). The Finns Party is the only party that has never been appointed at the executive level. Table 3.1 summarises the score of those parties in general elections held during the period analysed.

Table 3.1 Percentage vote for Finnish political parties in parliamentary elections, from 1991 to 2007

	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007
Centre Party (KESK)	24.8	19.8	22.4	24.7	23.1
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	22.1	28.2	22.9	24.5	21.4
National Coalition Party (KOK)	19.3	17.9	21.0	18.5	22.3
Left Alliance (VAS)	10.0	11.2	10.9	9.9	8.8
Green League (VIHR)	6.8	6.5	7.3	8.0	8.5
Swedish People’s Party (RKP)	5.5	5.1	5.1	4.6	4.6
Rural/Finns Party (SMP – PS) ¹	(4.85)	(1.3)	1.0	1.6	4.1
Christian Democrats (KD)	3.0	3.0	4.2	5.3	4.9
Others	3.5	6.9	5.3	2.3	2.3
Turnout	72.1	71.9	68.3	69.7	67.8

Source: Sundberg (1992; 1996; 2000; 2004; 2008).

¹ The Finns Party ran for election for the first time in 1999, succeeding the Rural Party (*Suomen Maaseudun Puolue*, SMP) – see section 3.2.6.3.

This section gives a brief history of each of these parties and analyses the evolution of their position on European integration according to the methodology previously outlined (see section 2.4). In order to offer a relevant comparative tool, this section is divided into one sub-section per party family for each empirical chapter. The final sub-section then offers a broad comparison between all well-established parties in terms of preferences regarding horizontal European integration per selected policy area.

3.2.1. Conservative Party

The National Coalition Party is a centre-right conservative type of party, founded in 1918. With the Social Democratic and Centre parties, it is considered as one of the ‘big three’ of Finland, which shared between 57.5 per cent (in 1962) and 67.8 per cent (in 2003) of votes altogether (Arter 2012). However, between 1966 and 1987, KOK was excluded from coalition governments because of Moscow’s influence over Finnish domestic politics (Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003). The party is ideologically close to the Centre Party and, to a lower extent, the Christian Democrats and the Swedish People’s Party.³¹ At the Nordic level, KOK co-operates with its conservative peers mostly through the Nordic Council.³² At the European level, it is a member of the European People’s Party. Between the 1991 and 2007 general elections, the electoral score of the party fluctuated between 17.9 per cent (in 1995) and 22.3 per cent (in 2007).

The National Coalition Party has always been supportive of European integration, despite being opposed to the concept of European federalism (Johansson and Raunio 2001). It can even be argued that it is the most united party on this issue, as well as the most pro-European party of Finland. Advocating an EU membership above the EEA from 1991 onwards (Kansallinen Kokoomus 1991), the party has also been supporting developments in the CFSP and the AFSJ (mostly through participation in the Schengen Area). When the issue became salient in the late 1990s, KOK unilaterally supported participation in the third stage of the EMU, outlining its economic benefits and its effects on the inflation. On this issue, the party did not call for the organisation of a referendum, as it was the case in Sweden (see further Chapter 4).³³ However, the party has been more critical towards the Common Agricultural Policy as well as regional/structural policies, arguing in its 1999 and 2003 manifestos that these policies were not successful in Finland (Kansallinen Kokoomus 1998; 2003). Nevertheless, the National Coalition Party can still

³¹ “We have a very strong positive opinion about the Centre Party. I think we are quite close to them. The Christian Democrats, the Swedish People’s Party too. For them, language is an important issue, but within the party, they have a very similar line to us” (Interview with a MP and a spokesperson from the National Coalition Party, 14 May 2013).

³² “I am member of the Nordic Council, and we have a Conservative group, in which there is our party, the Moderates, Høyre. In Denmark, there is no similar party in the Conservative group.” (ibid.).

³³ “I think that was a natural way, because we were already in the European Union, so it was the right choice to solve that issue in the parliament” (ibid.).

be considered as a pro-EU party that does not see differentiated integration as an option for Finland.

3.2.2. Social Democratic Party

The Finnish Social Democratic Party, founded in 1899, is the oldest and historically largest party of Finland, having gained an average of 25 per cent of votes in parliamentary elections since the end of the Second World War (Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003). Considered as a centre-left party, SDP closely co-operates with other Nordic social democratic parties and, in the European Parliament, is part of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats. At the national level, the party is ideologically close to the Left Alliance, but co-operates closely with the two other parties of the ‘big three’, i.e. the National Coalition and the Centre parties.³⁴ During the period analysed, the party’s electoral performance at the national level fluctuated between 21.4 per cent (in 2007) and 28.25 per cent (in 1995, which is also the largest electoral score ever obtained by a political party since Finland’s independence).

The Social Democratic Party’s on European integration has been largely positive. In November 1991, while being the largest political party in opposition and shortly before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the party demanded that Finland apply for an EU membership, while this option was not yet considered by Esko Aho’s cabinet (see section 3.3.1). Even though this decision was not unanimous within the party leadership, there were no major challenges and members opposed to such policy did not create a faction inside the party, as Labour members did in Norway (Johansson and Raunio 2001; on Norway, see Chapter 5). Despite being in the opposition then, the party thus fully supported the government’s decision to apply for an EU membership and campaigned for the Yes-side in 1994. The party was also the first one to position itself in favour of Finland’s participation in the third stage of the EMU: as early as 1993, the party executive committee stated that the EMU supports long-term economic growth and is in Finland’s interest. In 1997, the party congress almost unanimously voted in favour of joining the

³⁴ “Originally, the Left Alliance is close to us as we belong to the same mother party. [...] In order to understand the Finnish system, you just need to understand that we do not have a two-block system like in Sweden for instance. [...] You have to be prepared that two or three of the biggest parties might form the basis of the government” (Interview with a spokesperson from the Social Democratic Party, 15 May 2013).

third stage of the EMU (Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue 1998). The party has also supported Schengen membership and further co-operation in the AFSJ. The only policy area in which SDP showed some signs of reluctance is the CFSP, as the party does not want the EU to develop a common defence policy (Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003; Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue 2003). Nevertheless, the party does not promote differentiated integration for Finland. In sum, SDP wants Finland to play an active role at the European level and thus to be part of the EU's 'inner core'.

3.2.3. Agrarian Party

The Centre Party is an agrarian, moderate party located at the centre of the political spectrum and founded in 1906 as a countryside movement. Since then, the party has been more powerful in the countryside areas. However, unlike other its Nordic counterparts and despite being qualified as agrarian, KESK was not originally an interest group for farmers but a party based on the urban-rural cleavage (Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003).³⁵ Ideologically close to the Swedish People's Party at the national level,³⁶ the party also cooperates closely with its Nordic counterparts (Venstre in Denmark, and both Centre parties in Norway and Sweden). At the European level, KESK belongs to the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe [ALDE]. During the period analysed, except in 1999 by a small margin of 0.5 per cent, KESK has been Finland's largest party represented in the Eduskunta, with electoral results fluctuating between 22.4 per cent (in 1999) and 24.8 per cent (in 1991).

According to many analysts (Väyrynen 1993; Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003; Raunio 2005; Aylott *et al.* 2013), the Centre Party has been the party that suffered the most from divisions on the issue of European integration in Finland. Indeed, most of its supporters but also elite members were strongly opposed to an EU membership in the early 1990s. The main reason to explain this division is the legacy of the party's charismatic Leader and former President of Finland Urho Kekkonen, who led the country for more than 25 years under the powerful influence of Moscow (Väyrynen 1993). As a result, whereas

³⁵ "We are a very strong party amongst farmers but [...] from the beginning, our ideology was not to become an interest group for farmers. The ideology has something to do with the relations concerning individual responsibility and social responsibility. [...]" (Interview with a spokesperson from the Centre Party, 16 May 2013).

³⁶ "If you look at the history, the Swedish People's Party is very close to us" (*ibid.*).

some party members called for a change in the party's position on European co-operation, others wanted to keep the traditional stance and to preserve the whole concept of neutrality. These internal divisions were perceived in the party platform presented in 1990: "[w]hile participating in the European integration project, Finland needs to maintain its political and economic independence along with its national characteristics. Economic independence has its political dimension as well. Only a truly independent country can be neutral" (Keskusta 1990).³⁷ This party platform did not call for joining the European Union, but for Finland to be an 'active European' (*aktiivinen Eurooppalainen*). Despite some internal divisions, the party seemed to support the EEA agreement as an alternative to becoming a full member of the EU. However, in 1994, the then Party Leader and Prime Minister Esko Aho threatened to resign from both posts should the Centre Party oppose membership at the annual party congress: this enabled him to secure a two-thirds majority in favour of joining the European Union, mostly due to his political influence and despite strong opposition from several senior party figures (Raunio 1999; Johansson and Raunio 2001; Batory and Sitter 2004).³⁸ Hence, the (official) party stance towards European integration switched from an anti- to a pro-EU membership vision in 1994. Besides the importance of Aho's 'ultimatum', the possibility to enhance and influence international security under the CFSP and the economic advantages of derogations obtained from the Common Agricultural Policy were perceived as beneficial for Finland, according to KESK members (Miles 1995; Batory and Sitter 2004).³⁹

Following Finland's accession to the EU and after having been relegated to the opposition, KESK changed its position regarding European integration to return to a "soft Eurosceptic stance" (Batory and Sitter 2004: 540), without calling for a form of disintegration. Accordingly, from November 1995 onwards, the party has outlined the importance to maintain the EU as an intergovernmental organisation, with an institutional status quo (i.e. a strong Council) and no additional transfer of competencies to Brussels.

³⁷ Author's translation. "Euroopan yhdentymiseen osallistuessaan Suomen tulee säilyttää sekä poliittinen että taloudellinen itsenäisyytensä ja kansallinen omaleimaisuutensa. Taloudellisella itsenäisyydellä on poliittinenkin ulottuvuus. Vain tosiasiaa itsenäinen maa voi olla puolueeton"

³⁸ As mentioned by one interviewee: "I think that the Congress would have voted against if [Esko Aho] would not have said he would leave. The majority of party supporters were against EU membership" (Interview with a MP from the Centre Party, 22 May 2013).

³⁹ This affirmation on the Common Agricultural Policy can be contested, as the main primary producers' interest group closely linked to the party, the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK), always campaigned against membership. This constituted a factor explaining internal division within the party leadership (Raunio 1999; Raunio and Wiberg 2000).

The party has also opposed further developments related to the CFSP, supported military non-alignment and the prevalence of the United Nations as the main actor in terms of peacekeeping operations (Keskusta 1994; 1999; 2002; Raunio 1999). In September 1997, KESK decided at a party congress to oppose participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union. As outlined by an interviewee, “this was a rather easy decision, as not many MPs in my party would have preferred to vote for joining the EMU, because we were not in the government, and because the actual decision to join the European Union was so difficult”.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, following the outcome of the parliamentary vote on this issue on 17 April 1998 (see further section 3.3.2.1), KESK stated that it would not seek to withdraw from the EMU in the future (Raunio 1999). The party supported Schengen membership, seeing police and judicial co-operation as a step in the right direction. Finally, the party has been sceptical towards the Common Agricultural Policy and regional policies, mentioning in the late 1990s that in these policy areas, “financial resources can and must be distributed in the direction of the member states” (Keskusta 1999).⁴¹ As such, KESK wanted to reform these policies rather than promoting horizontal differentiation.

In sum, KESK’s position on European integration for the past twenty years can be summarised as such: opposed to joining the EU in the early 1990s; officially pro-membership during the referendum debate (1994), status quo and against deepening integration after 1995.

3.2.4. Liberal Party

The Swedish People’s Party of Finland is an ethno-regionalist liberal party⁴² founded in 1906 in order to represent and promote the interests of the Swedish-speaking minority living in the bilingual Finland. Ideologically close to the National Coalition Party, RKP is mostly influenced by Swedish politics and thus co-operates with non-socialist parties in

⁴⁰ Interview with a MP from the Centre Party, 22 May 2013.

⁴¹ Author’s translation: “Mm. alue- ja maatalouspolitiikassa päätöksentekoa ja varainkäyttöä voidaan ja niitä tulee hajauttaa jäsenmaiden suuntaan”.

⁴² In order to offer a balanced comparative analysis between the Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian party systems, the Swedish People’s Party is considered as belonging to the liberal party family within the framework of this study. Several studies categorise RKP as a liberal party (see e.g. Gilljam and Oscarsson 1996; Grendstad 2003; Downs and Riutta 2005). However, it should be borne in mind that unlike other Nordic liberal parties, RKP also has an ethno-regionalist identity (Arter 2008).

Sweden (i.e. the Christian Democrats, the Centre Party, the Liberal People's Party and the Moderate Party) as well as with the liberal parties of Denmark and Norway.⁴³ In the European Parliament, the party is represented in the ALDE group. Throughout the period analysed, the Swedish People's Party participated in the various coalition governments, and its electoral score in parliamentary elections remained relatively stable, varying from 4.6 per cent in 2003 and 2007 to 5.5 per cent in 1991.

Like the National Coalition Party, RKP has consistently been in favour of European integration, and this party position has not been challenged by most party members. As early as 1988, the party stated its willingness to promote pan-European co-operation (Svenska Folkpartiet i Finland 1988). In 1991, the party suggested that Finland should apply for EU membership if Sweden does so, stating that "Finland shall under no circumstances be isolated, either from Scandinavia or Europe as a whole" (Svenska Folkpartiet i Finland 1991).⁴⁴ In 1997, the party congress voted in favour of EMU membership, and welcomed developments in terms of foreign and security policy as well as judicial affairs. Similarly to other Finnish political parties, RKP has supported a partial transfer of agricultural powers back to the member states, as well as increasing the EU's powers in terms of environmental policies (Johansson and Raunio 2001). Finally, it should be noted that the party campaigned against the principle of multi-speed integration as included in the Amsterdam Treaty, thus formally opposing the concept of differentiated integration in the European Union (Raunio 1999). In sum, the party support Finland's position in the 'inner core' of the EU.

3.2.5. Christian Democratic Party

The Finnish Christian Democratic Party was founded in 1958 by the Christian faction of the National Coalition Party, influenced by the success of the Norwegian Christian Movement (Arter 1980; Karvonen 1993). Despite being depicted as a centre-right political

⁴³ "We focus on international politics and questions that are international. So we tend to co-operate with the non-socialist parties of Sweden: the Christian Democrats, the Centre Party, Folkpartiet and Moderata. We can say that we have international contacts with those parties in Sweden. (...) In Denmark, Venstre and Radicale Venstre are the two parties that belong to our family, and in Norway it is Venstre" (Interview with a spokesperson from the Swedish People's Party, 15 May 2013).

⁴⁴ Author's translation: "Finland får under inga omständigheter isoleras, varken från Norden eller Europa som helhet".

party (Giljam and Oscarsson 1996), some members of the party leadership do not consider KD as ideologically close to any particular party in Finland, and generally co-operates with left-wing parties on social topics and with right-wing parties on economic terms.⁴⁵ At the Nordic level, KD co-operates with parties belonging to the Christian democratic family, while in the European Parliament, the party belongs to the European People's Party. Furthermore, it should be noted that during the 2009 European elections, KD formed an alliance with the Finns Party. At the national level, its electoral score throughout the period analysed fluctuated 3 per cent in 1995 and 5.3 per cent in 2003. Despite these low results, the party was included in the Aho cabinet in 1991.

Together with the Rural Party (which later gave birth to the Finns Party), the Christian Democrats were opposed to an unconditional EU membership when the debate became salient in the early 1990s. Indeed, the party mentioned that Finland's attitude towards European integration "requires serious and careful consideration" (Suomen Kristillinen Liitto 1991).⁴⁶ Following the 1994 referendum, the party criticised developments at the European level both in terms of deepening and widening European integration, but did not campaign for withdrawing from the Union: as such, the party accepted the electorate's decision to join the EU. The party opposed participation in the EMU (until the government decided to join the Eurozone from 1999 onwards) as well as developments in various policies such as defence, regional policy as well as the Common Agricultural Policy. However, KD has welcomed European co-operation in the fields of energy, the environment, human rights, the fight against international crime and promoted co-operation in terms of political transparency, good governance and ethical issues such as the protection of life.

Broadly speaking, since the debate arose, KD has promoted European co-operation between independent states and, where appropriate, co-operation on an intergovernmental basis (Suomen Kristillinen Liitto 1995; 1998; Kristillisdemokraatit 2002; 2006). While the party leadership is mostly united on this issue, an interviewee stated

⁴⁵ "On social topics, we are sometimes close to the Social Democrats or even to the Left Alliance and the Greens. On economic and business-related decisions, it is easier for us to be close to the National Coalition Party and the Centre Party. Our position is changing depending on what decisions we need to take" (Interview with a MP from the Christian Democrats, 14 May 2013).

⁴⁶ Author's translation: "Päätettäessä maamme suhtautumisesta Euroopan yhdyntymiseen edellyttämme vakavaa ja huolellista harkintaa".

that grass-root supporters show signs of division over the evolution of the party position on Europe.⁴⁷

Despite their initially strong opposition to an EU membership in the early 1990s, the Christian Democrats have thus defended an intergovernmental vision of Europe since 1994. KD favours co-operation in a series of issues that are not limited to national borders, but also criticises developments which, in the party's views, does not bring any added value at the national level. Hence, despite not campaigning for withdrawing from the EU, the party has been rather opposed to European integration since the 1994 referendum, and has promoted disintegration in its party manifestos.

3.2.6. 'New Politics' Parties

In Finland, as mentioned by Zilliacus (2001: 27), two main political parties have established themselves in the national political landscape following two waves of new politics:

The first wave of new politics, represented by the student radicalism of the 1960s, was in Finland caught principally by the Communists, who managed to hold on to the majority of new radicals for much of the 1970s. The second wave of new politics in Finland, manifested in the independent anti-nuclear, environmental and feminist movements of the late 1970s, was transformed into the Green movement, which took on the leading role of anti-establishment politics from the early 1980s onwards.

Following several transformations in the late 1980s and early 1990s, those two main political movements gave birth to well-established political parties within Finland's party system: the Left Alliance and the Green League. In addition to Zilliacus' analysis, one populist right party, the Finns Party, should be added to this category of 'new politics' parties.

⁴⁷ "These years, our leaders have been more open-minded in terms of economic views and other EU-related topics [...]. There has been some movements: people who have become disappointed with our new party line" (Interview with a MP from the Christian Democrats, 14 May 2013).

3.2.6.1. Socialist Left Party

The Left Alliance is a left-wing political party founded in 1990 following the merger of the Communist Party of Finland (*Suomen Kommunistien Puolue*) and the Finnish People's Democratic League (*Suomen Kansan Demokraattinen Liitto*). Mostly inspired from the Danish Socialist People's Party, the party tried to break with its communist past to adopt a Red-Green stance, especially with the then imminent end of the Cold War (Zilliacus 2001; Dunphy 2007). In Finland, VAS is ideologically connected the Social Democratic Party, and co-operates with other Nordic socialist left parties through the Nordic Green Left Alliance. At the European level, the party is a member of the European United Left-Nordic Green Left, despite not having being represented in the European Parliament between 2009 and 2014. Between the 1991 and 2007 general elections, the party obtained between 8.8 per cent (in 2007) and 11.5 per cent (in 1995) of votes, making it the fourth largest party of Finland. At the executive level, VAS participated in both mandates of the Lipponen government between 1995 and 2003.

Since its creation, the Left Alliance's position on European integration has been rather mixed, and this issue has led to major internal divisions at all levels (Raunio 1999; Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003; Dunphy 2007). The programme adopted during the party's inaugural meeting in April 1990 illustrates such divisions, stating that “[t]he Finns must clarify their position on European integration” (Vasemmistoliitto 1990).⁴⁸ In the same programme, the party gave a series of preconditions for being in favour of the integration process, including the safeguarding of parliamentary powers and of Finland's foreign and security policy, as well as the prevalence of the existing welfare structures at the national level. When the issue of membership arose, the party failed to adopt an official position on this issue, despite most of its members campaigning for the No-side in 1994 and only 24 per cent of them voting in favour of EU membership, mostly due to opposition to the neoliberal aspects of the EU (Paloheimo 2000).⁴⁹ However, following the outcome of the

⁴⁸ Author's translation: “Suomalaisten on selvítettävä kantansa Euroopan integraatioon”.

⁴⁹ As stated by an interviewee, “(...) when we had a referendum over membership, the majority of members of the party were against membership, and were actually campaigning for the no side before the referendum. But after the referendum, the party accepted the result and adopted a policy to try to reform the European Union from within. But still: the Left Alliance has been very sceptic of the neoliberal policies and principles upon which the Union has been based on. It makes it difficult to reform the Union from within when the core principles of the Union are based on market freedom and so on” (Interview with a policy adviser from the Left Alliance, 14 May 2013). See also Raunio (1999: 148-149): “[t]his resistance is mainly explained by ideology: the market-driven logic of the integration project is rather distant from the worldview of the average VAS voter”.

referendum, the party decided to accept the electorate's decision. In the 1995 manifesto, VAS mentioned its willingness to develop the EU into a "pan-European intergovernmental union" (Vasemmistoliitto 1995)⁵⁰ and to promote social policies (the expression 'Social Europe', *Sosiaalinen Eurooppa*, being mentioned in all party manifestos). In 1997, the party adopted a resolution to reform the European Union, consisting of increasing the powers of the European and national parliaments (especially vis-à-vis the Commission); giving more power to Brussels on social, environmental and taxation policies "where majority voting should be the general decision rule" (Raunio 1999: 149); and by partially transferring competences back to the member states in terms of agricultural policies.⁵¹ Like other Finnish parties, the Left Alliance has opposed developments relating to the CFSP, without promoting any forms of horizontal differentiated integration.

One interesting aspect of the Left Alliance's European integration policy is its position on participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union. While the party opposed such policy in the short run in its 1995 and 1996 manifestos, the government's intention to join the third stage of the EMU by the beginning of 1999 challenged the party's position. As VAS was part of the Lipponen cabinet, the leadership organised an internal vote in order to let its members decide whether or not the party should continue in the government, and thus accept the decision of joining the third stage of the EMU. A slight majority of party members (52.4 per cent) voted in favour of a membership (Raunio 1999; see also section 3.3.2). As outlined by an interviewee, "the majority of the more Eurosceptic party supporters felt that they were pressured to accept EMU membership, as otherwise the Left Alliance would have had to leave the government",⁵² thereby providing an explanation for the ideological switch that occurred within the party. In subsequent years, the party did not substantially change its stance towards European integration. In short, throughout the period analysed, the Left Alliance struggled to adopt a consistent position on the issue of European integration, which now varies per policy area.

⁵⁰ Author's translation: "Vasemmistoliitto toimii EU:n kehittämiseksi yleiseurooppalaisena valtioiden välisenä liittona".

⁵¹ This call for a partial disintegration of agricultural policies, however, has not been mentioned in subsequent party manifestos.

⁵² Interview with a policy adviser from the Left Alliance, 14 May 2013.

3.2.6.2. Green Party

The Green League is a centre-oriented party founded in 1987 by various social movements, including the Green feminists, the Green society, the Green disabled movement and the Association of Environmental Politics (Zilliacus 2001). At the domestic level, VIHR is open to co-operation with almost all parties in Finland.⁵³ At the Nordic level, the party co-operates very closely with its Swedish counterpart. VIHR is a member of the European Green Party and is represented in the European Parliament under the Greens/European Free Alliance group. In the words of Raunio and Tiilikainen (2003: 52), “[o]f the Finnish parties, the Green League has probably been most influenced by such transnational party activities”. The party’s electoral score at the national level fluctuated between 6.5 per cent in 1995 and 8.5 per cent in 2007. VIHR was represented in the Lipponen government between 1995 and 2003 as well as in the Vanhanen II/Kiviniemi cabinet between 2007 and 2011.

Until the late 1990s, the Green League’s position on European co-operation was quite similar to the one chosen by the Left Alliance.⁵⁴ When the European issue arose in the early 1990s, the party leadership failed to take a position due to internal divisions; nevertheless, it expressed strong reservations on participation in the future EEA in the 1990 party manifesto by stipulating, e.g., that “[t]he social and ecological consequences of the European Economic Area are not consistent with the objectives of the Greens/European Free Alliance” (Vihreä Liitto 1990).⁵⁵ Following the outcome of the referendum, the party opted for a partial opposition to the process of European integration, mostly calling for making the EU’s decision-making structures more democratic, transferring part of the agricultural policies to the national level and increasing European competences in terms of environmental and energy policies (Vihreä Liitto 1994; 1998). The party has also opposed developments towards a common defence policy, and

⁵³ “I would not say that we are close to any party. We are close to different parties in different agendas so it differs. And we are also open to co-operation with almost all parties” (Interview with a policy adviser from the Green League, 22 May 2013).

⁵⁴ However, it should be noted that the position of party members is much more mixed than in the case of VAS, with 55 per cent voting in favour of EU membership in 1994 against 24 per cent of Left Alliance members (Paloheimo 2000).

⁵⁵ Author’s translation: “Euroopan talousalueen sosiaaliset ja ekologiset seuraukset eivät sovi yhteen vihreiden tavoitteiden kanssa”.

did not call for horizontal differentiated integration. Like VAS, while the party's initial position on EMU membership was rather negative (with the party calling for its postponement), its participation in the Lipponen cabinet has also resulted into an "ideological U-turn" on this matter (Raunio 2008: 174). In 1998, the party council voted in favour of EMU membership with 31 votes for and 13 against (Johansson and Raunio 2001; see also section 3.3.2). Since the 2000s, the party has become much more pro-European and has progressively abandoned its 'anti-Europe' stance, adopting for instance a statement in favour of a decentralised federal Europe, "for a strong Europe of the regions" (Vihreä Liitto 2002).⁵⁶ In the party manifesto for the 2003 general election, VIHR called for major European developments in terms of crisis management, while still defending Finland's principle of non-alignment (Vihreä Liitto 2003). In sum, the Green League's position on European integration has changed through time, from being strongly divided to becoming rather pro-EU in recent years, with some signs of variation in support depending on the policy area.

3.2.6.3. Populist Right Party

The Finns Party was founded in 1995 following the Rural Party's bankruptcy.⁵⁷ Despite sharing some similarities with far-right nationalist and anti-immigration parties (Arter 2010), PS is considered as a centrist party by both academics (Ruostetsaari 2003; Jungar and Jupskås 2011; Raunio 2012) and the party leadership.^{58, 59} Historically linked to the Centre Party, the Finns Party closely co-operates with the Danish People's Party⁶⁰ and is part of the Europe of Freedom and Democracy group in the European Parliament. At

⁵⁶ Author's translation: "Kohti vahvaa alueiden Eurooppa – kannanotto EU:n kehittämiseen".

⁵⁷ The Finnish Rural Party (*Suomen maaseudun puolue*, SMP) was an anti-establishment party founded in 1959 by a splinter group from the KESK. Despite opposition from the party leadership, the Finns Party is best viewed as a successor party from SMP, as it shares the same values and was founded by former SMP leaders (Arter 2010).

⁵⁸ "According to research conducted at the University of Tampere, we are located between the Centre Party and the Social Democrats. We agree with this, as we work for social welfare in Finland" (Interview with a MP and a policy adviser from the Finns Party, 17 May 2013).

⁵⁹ "We are a centrist party. I am personally more located to the right in terms of finance, but as a whole, we are a centrist party" (Interview with a MP from the Finns Party, 17 May 2013).

⁶⁰ "In the Nordic Council, we are in the same party group as the Danish People's Party, and we are in the same group in the European Parliament as well. We do not co-operate with other parties in the Nordic States" (Interview with a MP from the Finns Party, 21 May 2013).

the time of writing and despite a major breakthrough in the 2011 general election,⁶¹ this is the only well-established Finnish party that has not been represented in the government since its creation. Throughout the period analysed, the Finns Party (and, until 1995, the Rural Party) gained between and 1 per cent (in 1999) and 4.85 per cent (in 1991) of votes in national elections.

PS has consistently been opposed to *further* European integration, insisting on its drawbacks in each party manifestos; however, while its parent party fiercely opposed EU membership in the early 1990s, the Finns Party did not suggest a withdrawal in its original manifesto. The party has never mentioned its willingness to leave the European Union, nor even called for differentiated *disintegration*. Accordingly, an interviewee declared that such possibility has never been considered, and summarised the party line towards European integration by stating that “[w]e would like to remain part of the European Union. We are not supporting the exit line, not at the moment. We would like to renew the Union, to make it work better. If the Commission does not want to do it, then we might have to change our line, but at the moment we would like Finland to remain in the Union”.⁶² The party has been strongly opposed to participation in the third stage of the EMU: following Finland’s membership in 1999, the party remained critical of this policy choice but has never called for leaving the Eurozone. In addition, PS has also been critical of developments relating to the CFSP, the AFSJ and the Common Agricultural Policy without, however, calling for a form of disintegration. In short, and despite common beliefs, PS has not been opposed to Finland’s participation in the European Union, despite calling for major reforms.

⁶¹ In 2011, the Finns Party became the third largest party of Finland with 19.1 per cent of votes (+15 per cent in comparison with 2007) and gaining a total of 39 MPs (+34). For an analysis of this breakthrough, see Arter (2012).

⁶² Interview with a MP from the Finns Party, 21 May 2013.

3.2.7. Party positions - summary

Table 3.2 Finnish parties' positions on participation in European integration (1991 – 2010), by selected policy area

	EU	EEA (until 1995)	CFSP	AFSJ	EMU
KOK	++	++	++	++	++
SDP	++	++	+	++	++
KESK	- (until 1994) + (after 1994)	+	-	+	- (until 1999) 0 (after 1999)
RKP	++	++	++	++	++
KD	-- (until 1995) + (after 1995)	+	-	-	-- (until 1999) 0 (after 1999)
VAS	0 (until 1995) + (after 1995)	+	-	+	-- (until 1998) + (after 1998)
VIHR	0 (until 1995) + (after 1995)	-	+	+	- (until 1998) + (after 1998)
PS	-- (until 1995) + (after 1995)	--	--	--	--

++ = official party line in favour of co-operation in this area, no internal divisions

+ = official party line in favour of co-operation in this area, internal divisions

0 = neutral or no official position on participation in this area

- = official party line opposed to co-operation in this area, internal divisions

-- = official party line opposed to co-operation in this area, no internal divisions

Based on interviews and manifesto analysis, Table 3.2 gives a general summary of the well-established parties' positions on Finland's participation in European integration for each selected policy area. This table demonstrates the variety of party positions, even though according to Raunio (2008: 168), "Finnish parties have been remarkably solid in their support for integration", especially from a comparative perspective (see further Chapter 6). Party positions on Europe can be divided into three categories: KOK, SDP and RKP have mostly been in favour of participation in all policy areas; KESK, VAS and VIHR have been in favour of European integration in some policy areas, while being divided on the function of the European Union in Finland; and KD as well as PS have consistently been opposed to further European integration. Three main sets of conclusions can be given. First, none of the well-established political party in Finland has ever called for withdrawing from the Union after the outcome of the referendum in 1994, even the most reluctant ones (i.e. KD and PS; see Raunio 1999). This means that European co-operation has been broadly accepted in Finland's political sphere. Second, some political parties have changed their position regarding European integration in some policy areas (mostly on participation in the EMU) to adopt a more positive view. This will

be explored further in the next section of this chapter. Third, with the (partial) exception of agricultural policies which are not analysed in this study,⁶³ it appears that differentiated *disintegration*⁶⁴ has not been considered as viable option by any parties, including the most reluctant ones. Accordingly, throughout the period analysed, political parties did not propose a ‘cherry-picking’ position on European integration. Instead of campaigning in favour of disintegration, reluctant parties campaigned (especially KD and PS) against deepening European integration and ultimately seemed to accept government decisions.

The following section will now analyse government positions on European integration, from 1991 (the Aho I cabinet) to 2010 (the Kiviniemi cabinet).

3.3. Finnish governments and their positions on European integration (1991 – 2010)

Between 1991 and 2010, five general elections were held, and five different governments were composed. All cabinets were majority coalition governments composed of three to five political parties, as outlined in Table 3.3. Furthermore, it should be added that all coalitions included at least two of the ‘big three’ political parties, i.e. the Social Democratic Party, the National Coalition Party and/or the Centre Party.

⁶³ As stated in Chapter 2, the Common Agricultural and Fisheries policies are not analysed in this study as differentiated integration does not take place in these policy areas.

⁶⁴ Differentiated disintegration is here understood as the political decision to withdraw from participation in one or several European policies.

Table 3.3 List and characteristics of Finnish cabinets, 1991 – 2010

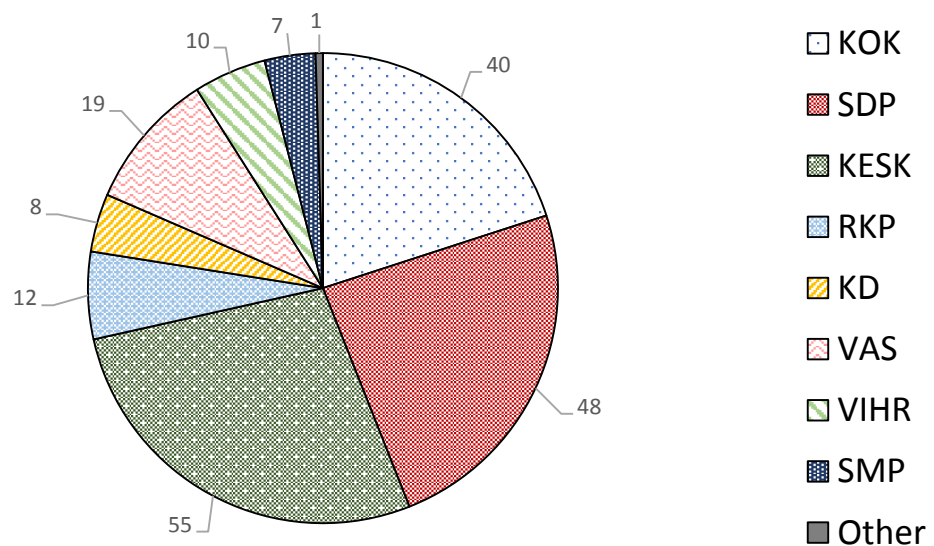
Dates	Cabinet	Parties included	Government position on a left-right scale (Kim and Fording index)	Percentage of government's share of MPs
26 April 1991 – 20 June 1994	Aho I	Centre Party National Coalition Party Swedish People's Party Christian Democrats	-1.59	57.5
20 June 1994 – 13 April 1995	Aho II	Centre Party National Coalition party Swedish People's Party	-2	53.5
13 April 1995 – 15 April 1999	Lipponen, first mandate	Social Democratic Party National Coalition Party Swedish People's Party Left Alliance Green League	-3.22	72.5
15 April 1999 – 17 April 2003	Lipponen, second mandate	Social Democratic Party National Coalition Party Swedish People's Party Left Alliance Green League	6.38	70
17 April 2003 – 19 April 2007	Jäätteenmäki / Vanhanen I	Centre Party Social Democratic Party Swedish People's Party	-1.23	58.5
19 April 2007 – (22 June 2011)	Vanhanen II / Kiviniemi	Centre Party National Coalition Party Swedish People's Party Green League	-25.3	63

The aim of this section is to analyse government positions taken on European issues, and to explain why they decided to adopt a particular stance on participation in EU policies. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the emphasis is put on five main policies: EEA membership, application for an EU membership, participation in the Schengen area (as part of the policy Area of Freedom, Security and Justice), participation in the third stage of the EMU, and participation in the EU Battle Groups (as part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy area). This section will conclude with a summary of the key empirical findings for Finland with regard to the five hypotheses tested in this study.

3.3.1. Aho I and II (26 April 1991 – 13 April 1995)

The March 1991 election campaign was atypical, due to the outbreak of the Gulf War. The main issues raised by the ruling parties (i.e. KOK, SDP, RKP and SMP) were related to economic policies, the agriculture, the environment, but also the future of Finland's experience of European integration through negotiations related to the future EEA agreement. The campaign was mostly driven by the Centre Party, which successfully based its strategy on the electorate's dissatisfaction with the sitting government while adopting a low profile "in order not to offend any of its potential coalition partners to the left as well as to the right" (Berglund 1991: 335).

Figure 3.1 Composition of the Eduskunta following the 1991 election, per seats



Source: Sundberg (1992)

Consequently, KESK and its leader Esko Aho emerged as the winners of this general election, with a total of 55 seats (+15 compared to the previous election held in 1987). All the parties sitting in government lost seats (-13 for KOK, -8 for the SDP, - 2 for the SMP and -1 for the RKP). As a result, President Koivisto appointed Aho to form a cabinet. Following negotiations with all party leaders, a centrist⁶⁵ surplus majority coalition government⁶⁶ was sworn on 26 April 1991, with KESK, KOK, RKP and KD holding ministries and accounting for 57.5 per cent of parliamentary seats.

Whereas EU membership was still off the agenda and despite variations in the parties' attitudes on this issue, the Aho I cabinet adopted a rather positive stance towards European integration in the coalition agreement. The government welcomed developments related to the future EEA and mentioned the willingness to negotiate a "balanced agreement" (Sundberg 1992: 397). As stated in the government programme, "[t]he aim [of EEA negotiations] is to ensure, as far as possible, that Finnish individuals and citizens have equal access to the European Single Market and that EFTA countries have the possibility to influence the development of the economic legislation" (Government of Finland 1991).⁶⁷ Broadly speaking, EEA negotiations did not appear as a threat and the final negotiated agreement was welcomed by the majority of political elites, as it did not endanger Finland's policy of neutrality nor the national decision-making system. The vote on EEA membership took place on 27 October 1992. 154 MPs voted in favour and 12 voted against (see Table 3.4), demonstrating the overwhelming political consensus on this issue. The only parties that showed some reluctance towards the EEA agreement were the Rural Party and the Green League, both standing in the opposition.

⁶⁵ As Aho I's value on Kim and Fording's index of government partisanship is -1.59, it is considered as a centrist government.

⁶⁶ A surplus majority coalition government is defined as a government from which "a party can be removed [...] without endangering its majority status" (Clark *et al.* 2008: 180).

⁶⁷ Author's translation: "Tavoitteena on sen avulla turvata suomalaisille henkilöille ja yrityksille mahdollisimman tasavertainen asema eurooppalaisilla sisämarkkinoilla sekä EFTA-maille riittävät vaikutusmahdollisuudet talousaluetta koskevan säännösten kehittämistyössä".

Table 3.4 Eduskunta's vote on the European Economic Area agreement, per party⁶⁸

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
KOK	39	32	0	7
SDP	48	39	0	9
KESK	55	44	0	11
RKP	12	10	0	2
KD	8	7	1	0
VAS	19	16	1	2
VIHR	10	4	5	1
SMP	7	1	5	1
Other	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	199	154	12	33

Source: Eduskunta's archives.

As mentioned in section 3.1, Sweden's application for an EU membership, which was submitted on 1 July 1991 (see Chapter 4), had a direct impact on the government's position on European integration. Discussions on a potential application for full membership arose within the government over the summer, until the formal decision to apply was presented before the Eduskunta in March 1992. Four reasons explain why the government took eight months to reach a decision on this issue. First, the issue of European integration was rather new and the political elites had to adapt to this novelty. Second, international co-operation had been traditionally dealt in economic terms (e.g. through EFTA or the EEA), with few discussions on political integration (Raunio and Tiilikainen 2003). Third, there were on-going negotiations regarding the future EEA agreement, which constituted the main priority of the Aho I cabinet. Finally, there was a clear lack of consensus over a potential EU membership amongst the parties sitting in government. The latter factor deserves a particular attention within the framework of this thesis.

As emphasised in the previous section, RKP and KOK (both accounting for 45 per cent of the parliamentary seats within the cabinet) were fully supportive of joining the European Union, while KESK (48 per cent) was divided on this issue and KD (7 per cent) was unanimously against. In other words, there was no clear pro-membership majority within the government, and applying for an EU membership was a difficult

⁶⁸ As written in the Constitution of Finland, the Speaker of the parliament (at that time Ilkka Suominen, KOK) does not participate in debates or votes in plenary sessions, and is thus not included in the list of MPs. Only one MP abstained from voting (Puhakka, KESK), while others were absent.

decision to take in terms of political cohesion in the cabinet. In an attempt to solve this problem, KESK Party Leader and Prime Minister Aho pledged to hold a referendum on EU membership to avoid a split within his party (Sundberg 1993). Despite the fact that such referendum was not legally binding,⁶⁹ this decision was politically important as Finland did not have a tradition of direct democracy, unlike its Scandinavian neighbours. The Christian Democrats were most critical and disagreed over the decision to apply for a membership, putting the *raison d'être* of their participation in this surplus majority coalition at risk.

On 18 March 1992, a series of votes regarding a potential application for EU membership took place in the Eduskunta. A total of seven government proposals were presented, all ranging from an 'absolute yes' to an 'absolute no' (Sundberg 1993). The government's proposal in favour of an application with some reservations received 108 votes in favour and 55 against (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Eduskunta's vote on the government's proposal to submit an application for European Union membership (with some reservations), per party⁷⁰

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / Absents
KOK	39	39	0	0
SDP	48	0	47	1
KESK	55	53	0	2
RKP	12	11	1	0
KD	8	4	0	4
VAS	19	0	0	19
VIHR	10	0	6	4
SMP	7	0	1	6
Other	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	199	108	55	36

Source: Eduskunta's archives.

However, due to technical peculiarities linked to this multiple vote, it is rather difficult to provide a clear picture of the division of votes within the Eduskunta, especially since the

⁶⁹ To possibility to hold *consultative* referendums was added in the Constitution of Finland in 1987 (section 53, stating that "The decision to organise a consultative referendum is made by an Act, which shall contain provisions on the time of the referendum and on the choices to be presented to the voters").

⁷⁰ This vote concerns one of the seven government's proposal presented in the parliament, all ranging from an absolute yes to an absolute no. The selected proposal could be summarised in those terms: yes to an application, with some reservations in terms of Finland's neutrality and agricultural policies (Sundberg 1993).

pro-EU Social Democrats were in the opposition and voted against some of these proposals. According to Kuosmanen's (2001) estimation, 133 MPs (mostly from KOK, SDP and RKP) voted in favour of EU membership, while 60 were against (mostly from SMP, VAS, VIHR and coalition partner KD). Despite Aho's pledge to hold a referendum over this issue, the Centre Party remained strongly divided, and 22 of its 55 MPs positioned themselves against membership (Karttunen 2009). In sum, the government's proposal to submit an application for EU membership eventually received two thirds of the votes in the Eduskunta. An internal conflict occurred in the government as KD Minister Kankaanniemi abstained from voting. While he was close from being expelled from the government, the conflict was (temporarily) solved when Kankaanniemi promised Prime Minister Aho to support the government's position over this issue in the future, despite the party's diverging views (Sundberg 1993). Furthermore, the cabinet cautiously avoided committing to the membership option before completing the accession talks with Brussels.

In April 1994, the negotiations were completed, with minor difficulties encountered in sensitive policy areas such as the agriculture and foreign policy. An accession treaty was ready to be signed by the government in June.⁷¹ However, the Christian League expressed their disapproval of the agreement. Consequently, the party and its minister Kankaanniemi left the government and moved to the opposition, formally creating the Aho II cabinet consisting of KESK, KOK and RKP (Sundberg 1994). In other words, the only (united) anti-membership party's participation in the government was incompatible with the decision to sign the accession treaty, notwithstanding the organisation of a referendum over this issue. In practice, this change in the composition of the cabinet did not affect its nature: it remained a centrist majority coalition, and its cohesion in terms of European integration policy was strengthened despite internal divisions within the Centre Party.

Before the referendum campaign started, all parties held congresses to choose which position to adopt. In order to maintain the government's political cohesion, Aho threatened to resign from the government if the Centre Party congress voted against membership, and eventually secured a two-thirds majority in his favour. Nevertheless, the

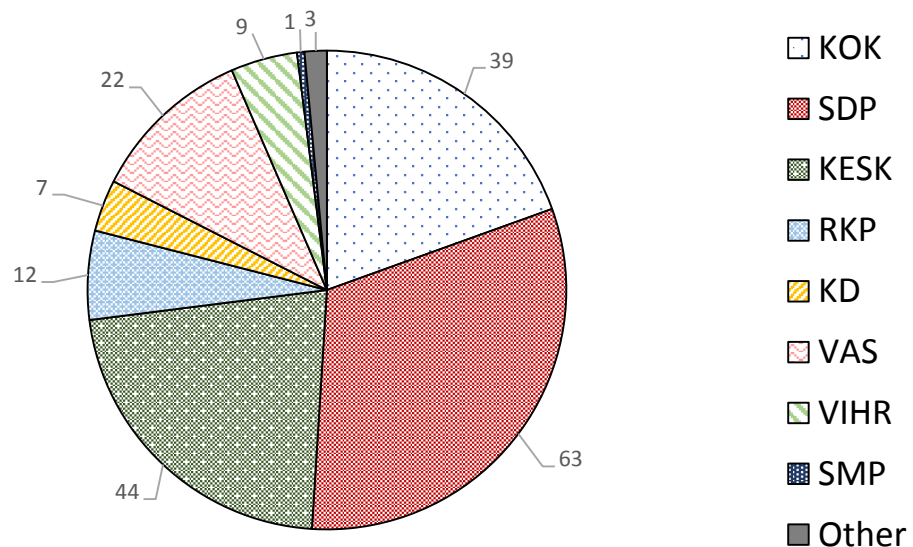
⁷¹ On accession negotiations and the referendum campaign see e.g. Arter (1995a), Tiilikainen (1996), Ingebritsen and Larson (1997), Raunio and Tiilikainen (2003).

party remained split and former Party Leader Paavo Väyrynen became the head of the anti-EU fraction within KESK.⁷² Three profiles emerged from the various congresses: parties in favour of an EU membership (KOK, SDP, RKP and the divided KESK), parties opposed to an EU membership (SMP and KD), and parties who failed to adopt an official position (VAS and VIHR; see sections 3.2.6.1 and 3.2.6.2). The referendum was held on 16 October 1994, and a majority of 56.9 per cent of the electorate voted in favour of joining the European Union (with a turnout of 70.8 per cent). Consequently, the Eduskunta approved the accession treaty, with 152 MPs following the referendum result and 45 against (mostly from SMP, KD and a minority of KESK representatives).⁷³

3.3.2. Lipponen (13 April 1995 – 17 April 2003)

3.3.2.1. First mandate (1995 – 1999)

Figure 3.2 Composition of the Eduskunta following the 1995 election, per seats



Source: Sundberg (1996).

⁷² This division within the Centre Party has been illustrated by the party members' voting behaviour: 36 per cent of KESK members voted in favour of membership while 63 voted against, thus contradicting the official party position (Sänkiäho 1994).

⁷³ In an attempt to reverse the outcome of the vote, MPs opposed to EU membership delayed the vote in the parliament, discussing about the legitimacy of the referendum and hoping for a rejection of membership by the Swedish population, in vain (Sundberg 1995).

Following a campaign centred on the deep economic crisis that hit the country for the past few years and that led to an unemployment rate close to 20 per cent, the main opposition party, i.e. the Social Democratic Party, won the 1995 election with a total of 63 seats (+15 compared to 1991), becoming the largest party represented in the Eduskunta. The Centre Party, on the other hand, lost 11 seats. The two other ruling parties, the National Coalition Party (-1 seat) and the Swedish People's Party (status quo), remained stable. It should be noted that European integration issues (both in terms of EMU membership and developments of the CFSP) were left off the table, mostly because they were not perceived as vote-winners by party leaderships in this election (Arter 1995b).

Shortly after the elections, President Ahtisaari (social democrat) appointed SDP Party Leader Paavo Lipponen to form a new government. As emphasised by Sundberg (1996: 327), “[t]he aim was to form a strong majority cabinet with the capacity to lead the country out of the economic crisis and to protect national interests in the European Union”. In order to achieve these goals, Lipponen decided to form a surplus majority government, consisting of five parties of both left and right sides of the political spectrum: SDP, KOK, VAS, RKP and VIHR. In terms of representation in the parliament, this centrist ‘rainbow coalition’ accounted for 72.5 per cent of MPs, leaving KESK, KD, SMP and the short-lived Progress Party (*Nuorsuomalaiset*, also translated as ‘Young Finns’) in the opposition. While such a surplus majority government was not perceived as a necessity, “[t]he inclusion of surplus parties was for [SDP] related both to benefits and to low costs with regard to both policy and office seeking in the shorter as well the longer term” (Jungar 2002: 79).

In terms of party positions on European integration, the government was divided: while SDP, KOK and RKP were broadly pro-integrationist parties, VAS and VIHR were more reluctant. As EMU and Schengen memberships were to appear on top the cabinet agenda, the coalition agreement took a rather pro-integrationist stance by stating, e.g., that Finland was ready to fulfil the criteria for joining the Monetary Union, despite the reluctance of some parties within the coalition (Sundberg 1996). The following paragraphs analyse developments related to Finland's participation in Schengen and the third stage of the EMU.

In June 1995, while negotiations to include all Nordic countries in the Schengen agreement were underway, the Finnish government made a formal request for observer status (van der Rijt 1997). As in Sweden and Norway (see Chapters 4 and 5), Schengen membership was seen as a mean to preserve Nordic co-operation and thus did not face major opposition within the government and within the parliament. Following the decision to include Schengen within the framework of the European Union at the Amsterdam Intergovernmental Conference, the Eduskunta voted in favour of Schengen membership on 15 June 1998, with 119 MPs in favour and 3 against (see Table 3.6).

Table 3.6 Eduskunta's vote on participation in the Schengen area, per party⁷⁴

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions /absents
KOK	38	25	0	13
SDP	62	31	0	31
KESK	45	25	1	19
KD	6	4	1	1
RKP	12	7	0	5
VAS	19	15	0	4
VIHR	9	8	0	1
PS	1	0	1	0
Other	7	4	0	3
TOTAL	199	119	3	77

Source: Eduskunta's archives.

This vote reflects the low level of political conflict regarding the Schengen membership issue, with only three MPs voting against. Even amongst the reluctant Christian Democrats, a majority of representatives voted in favour of such membership. As stated above, one of the main reasons for this generally positive attitude towards this policy was the fact that such membership would secure the future of Nordic co-operation in this field (through the Nordic Passport Union), following Denmark's decision to join Schengen in the early 1990s (Zaiotti 2013).⁷⁵ As close co-operation with the Nordic states constituted one of the main priorities of all political parties in terms of foreign policy, the decision to join Schengen did not lead to major opposition amongst elites.

⁷⁴ The number of MPs per party slightly differs from Figure 3.2 due to defectors and splinter groups. The Speaker of the parliament was Riitta Uosukainen (KOK).

⁷⁵ On the Nordic Passport Union and Nordic co-operation in this field, see e.g. Neumann (2000); Bonnén and Søsted (2003).

In contrast, participation in the third stage of the EMU was seen as controversial both within the government and the parliament. Whereas the 'rainbow coalition' agreement stated that one of its central objectives was to meet the convergence criteria to eventually join the Eurozone, two ruling parties were particularly sceptical of such policy. Indeed, while SDP, KOK and RKP were fully supportive, VIHR and especially VAS were hesitant and believed that such issue should be decided by a popular referendum, as for the membership issue in 1994. As discussed in sections 3.2.6.1 and 3.2.6.2, the latter parties' participation in the rainbow coalition was at risk, and their members had to make a choice: either to support the government's position on participation in the EMU and stay in the government, or to refuse to change the party's stance and thus join the opposition. Due to the nature of the coalition (i.e. surplus majority), both parties could have left the government without threatening its *raison d'être*: as of 1998, a coalition consisting of only pro-EMU parties (KOK, SDP and RKP) would have accounted for 56.5 per cent of MPs. Following internal votes in 1997, both VAS and VIHR decided to support participation in the EMU, thus remaining in the rainbow coalition. The main reason for this switch was that for both parties, the costs of opposition were greater than the benefits. More precisely, the main goal sought by VAS and VIHR, as small young parties, was "to develop into credible parties of government that would be more attractive to voters as well as to other government parties in the future" (Jungar 2002: 74). These parties' ideology thus did not play a role in shaping their final decision.

Within the Eduskunta, positions on participation in the EMU were split on a government-opposition basis. Following VAS and VIHR's decision to support the government's position, KESK, KD and PS were the only parties to stand against such policy. The main argument raised by the Centre Party was that since Denmark and Sweden⁷⁶ were opposed to join the Eurozone as early as 1999, Finland should adopt the same position in order to safeguard Nordic co-operation (Sundberg 1998). The party also called for a popular referendum on the issue, but Prime Minister Lipponen dismissed such possibility when the debate arose. Table 3.7 confirms this division between government and opposition, with only 6 MPs from the majority voting against EMU membership (3 from VAS and 2

⁷⁶ The Swedish government's decision not to join the third stage of the EMU in the late 1990s will be analysed in Chapter 4.

from VIHR, the most reluctant parties) and 2 MPs from the opposition in favour on 17 April 1998.

Table 3.7 Eduskunta's vote on participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union, per party⁷⁷

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions /absents
KOK	38	38	0	0
SDP	62	60	1	1
KESK	45	0	43	2
RKP	12	12	0	0
KD	6	0	6	0
VAS	19	16	3	0
VIHR	9	7	2	0
PS	1	0	1	0
Other	7	2	5	0
TOTAL	199	135	61	3

Source: Eduskunta's archives.

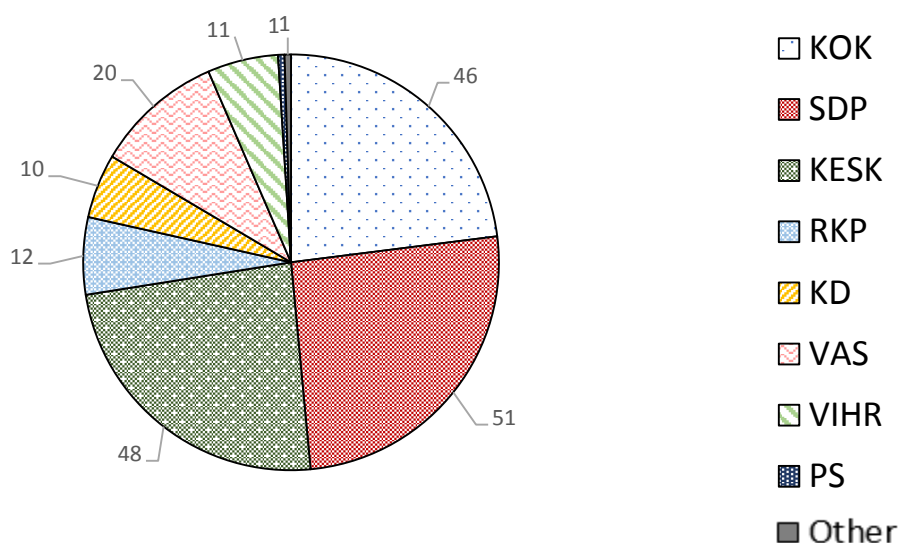
In sum, while participation in the Schengen area did not lead to major conflicts within the government and the parliament, the issue of EMU membership strongly divided political actors, to the point of putting the participation of VAS and VIHR in the coalition at risk.

3.3.2.2. Second mandate (1999 – 2003)

On 21 March 1999, a new general election was held in Finland. The campaign surrounding this election has been described as relatively quiet, mostly due to the fact that the outgoing government consisted of a surplus majority coalition, leaving little room for the opposition (Sundberg 2000). Furthermore, the economic record of the outgoing government was rather satisfactory, as Finland recovered from the deep recession that hit the country in the early 1990s (Arter 2000b).

⁷⁷ See footnote 66.

Figure 3.3 Composition of the Eduskunta following the 1999 election, per seats



Source: Sundberg (2000).

Despite a loss of 12 seats compared to the 1995 election, the Social Democratic Party remained the largest party represented in the Eduskunta, with a total of 51 seats. KOK gained a total of 46 seats (+7) while KESK, the largest party in opposition, gained 48 (+4). In sum, the election results facilitated the renewal of the centrist Rainbow Coalition. As in 1995, SDP Party Leader and outgoing Prime Minister Lipponen was appointed by President Ahtisaari to form a new government. On 15 April 1999, the Lipponen cabinet was renewed for a second mandate, consisting of the same coalition partners as the previous government (SDP, KOK, RKP, VAS and VIHR). This new surplus majority government accounted for a share of 70 per cent of MPs, and was still considered as centrist (+6.38 on Kim and Fording’s scale of government partisanship).

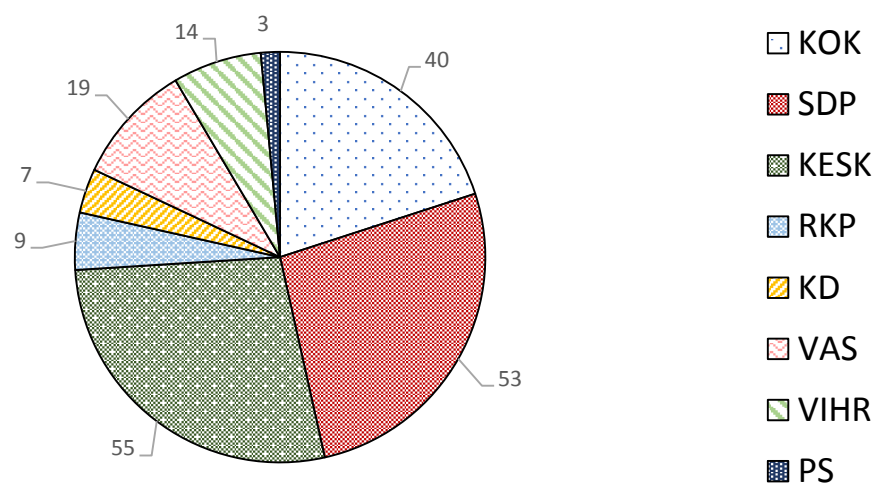
In terms of European policy, the government reiterated its willingness to use “the opportunities offered by the European Union to promote European co-operation in the fields of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law and market economy” (Government of Finland 1999).⁷⁸ The short-term objectives of the Lipponen government were to prepare the upcoming presidency of the Council of the European Union (from July to December 1999); to keep on promoting the Northern Dimension Initiative, which

⁷⁸ Author’s translation: “Suomi käyttää täysipainoisesti hyväksi Euroopan unionin tarjoamia mahdollisuuksia edistää eurooppalaista yhteistyötä demokratian, ihmisoikeuksien, oikeusvaltion ja markkinatalouden periaatteiden mukaisesti”.

had been suggested by the Finnish government in 1997 (Antola 1999; see also Gebhard 2013); and, together with its Swedish neighbour, to play an active role in shaping the future of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, especially in terms of crisis management (Jungar 2002; Downs and Riutta 2005; Andersson 2006). In short, the government’s general position on European integration remained relatively similar to the one adopted during the previous mandate, i.e. for Finland to be a decision-maker rather than being a passive implementer at the European level. Unlike in previous years, no major EU-related issues were discussed during plenary parliamentary sessions, and there was a general consensus over the government’s European policy.⁷⁹

3.3.3. Jäätteenmäki / Vanhanen I (17 April 2003 – 19 April 2007)

Figure 3.4 Composition of the Eduskunta following the 2003 election, per seats



Source: Sundberg (2004).

Unlike 1999, the 2003 general election was, in the words of Sundberg (2004: 1000), “the most dramatic in years in Finland”. Indeed, after 8 years as main party in the opposition in the shadow of two ‘Rainbow Coalition’ governments, the Centre Party became once again the largest party represented in the Eduskunta (55 seats, +7 compared to 1999)

⁷⁹ This consensus does not only concern EU-related issues: indeed, following the relative success of the first Rainbow Government and after the 1999 election, Arter (2000b: 184) stated that there was “a case to be made for a Finnish model of government” and highlighted, e.g., the broad consensus amongst political parties in the Finnish party system.

following a campaign that was mostly driven by speculations over the coming cabinet formation, the unemployment rate and the war in Iraq (Arter 2003). The National Coalition Party did not perform in this election, losing a total of six seats compared to 1999. The Christian Democrats as well as the Swedish People's Party lost three seats each, while the Left Alliance lost only one and the Finns Party gained two. Meanwhile, the Social Democrats gained two additional seats, enabling them to become a potential major coalition partner for the winning Centre Party.

Following the election, KESK party leader Anneli Jäätteenmäki was given the role to form a cabinet, and unsurprisingly chose the SDP as main coalition partner, together with RKP to form a new centrist surplus majority government accounting for 58.5 per cent of MPs in parliament and nicknamed 'Red Earth coalition' (Arter 2003). Jäätteenmäki became the first female Prime Minister in the history of Finland. However, on 24 June (only two months after the general election), she had to resign following revelations on the use of classified documents during the election campaign. These allegations were referred to as 'Iraqgate' in the media (Downs and Riutta 2005). She got replaced by the new Centre Party leader Matti Vanhanen, and this change did not have any impact on the composition and nature of the cabinet.

The position taken by the Vanhanen I cabinet on European integration rather diverged from the one adopted by both Lipponen governments, and mostly reflected the position of the Centre Party: "[o]bservers correctly anticipated that [Vanhanen] would jealously guard Finland's neutrality and military independence in the face of EU attempts to construct a common foreign and security policy" (Downs and Riutta 2005: 440). In other words, the Red Earth coalition was more reluctant to support and promote the process of deepening European integration during Intergovernmental Conferences. This is illustrated, e.g., by the unenthusiastic position taken by the government on the draft constitution for the European Union as well as on the future of the CFSP. In early 2004, political figures from the most pro-integrationist parties, including Stubb (KOK) and former Prime Minister Lipponen (despite being a coalition member and Chair of the Eduskunta), expressed their concerns regarding this switch in the government's European policy (Helsingin Sanomat 2004). Nevertheless, in terms of horizontal integration (which constitutes the main focus of this thesis), the Vanhanen I cabinet's position remained

similar to the one adopted by its predecessor, that is for Finland to stay in the ‘inner core’ of the Union.

Few discussions on European issues took place during parliamentary plenary sessions for this term.⁸⁰ On 8 December 2006, the Eduskunta pronounced itself on the government’s proposal to participate in the EU Battle Group 107 from January to June 2007, jointly with troops from Germany and the Netherlands. Even though this vote was purely consultative as mentioned in the Military Crisis Management Act,⁸¹ it was rather symbolic as the parliament rarely had the opportunity of pronouncing itself on CFSP-related issues, especially since the constitutional reforms introduced in 2000 which empowered the government in the field of foreign policy (see section 3.1).

Table 3.8 Eduskunta’s vote on participation in the European Union Battle Group 107, per party⁸²

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions /absents
KOK	42	41	0	1
SDP	52	41	1	10
KESK	54	48	0	6
KD	6	2	4	0
VAS	19	0	17	2
VIHR	14	12	0	2
PS	3	0	2	1
RKP	9	8	0	1
TOTAL	199	152	24	23

Source: Eduskunta’s archives.

The vote, as outlined in Table 3.8, did not follow the logic of majority versus opposition. In addition to a majority of MPs from KESK, RKP and SDP who voted in favour of Finland’s participation in this Battle Group, representatives from KOK and VIHR joined the parliamentary majority, leaving KD, PS and VAS in the No-side. In other words, this vote reflected the parties’ ideology towards this particular aspect of European co-operation. As mentioned by Kerttunen (2005: 74), “[p]articipation in international crisis management is an essential part of the Finnish foreign and security policy. It aims to

⁸⁰ Only four EU-related issues were raised in the parliament during this parliamentary term: the EU Constitutional Treaty; the EEA tax legislation, a European Central Bank legislation amendment and participation in the European Battle Group.

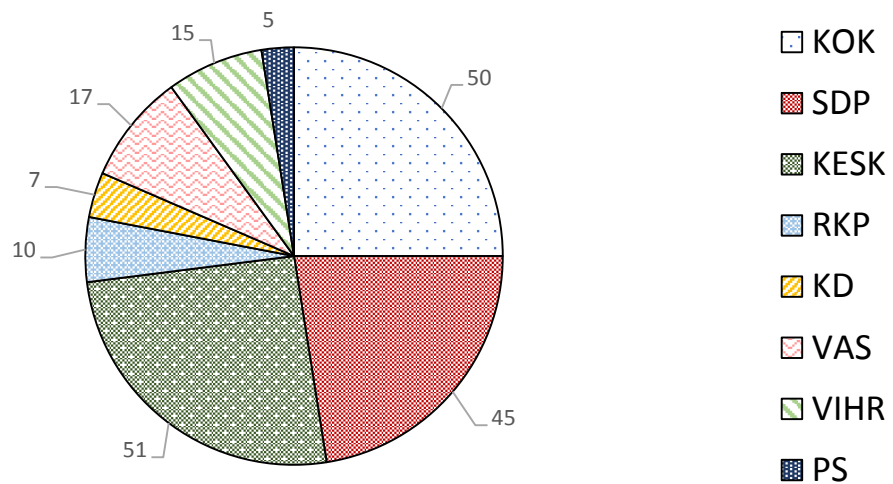
⁸¹ *Sotilaallisesta Kriisinballinnasta Annetun Lain* (211/2006), para. 3.

⁸² The number of MPs per party slightly differs from Figure 3.4 due to defectors and splinter groups. The Speaker of the parliament was Paavo Lipponen (SDP).

improve both international security and security of Finland”. This concept has been broadly accepted by the majority of Finnish political parties, including the reluctant ruling Centre Party as the Battle Group concept has not threatened Finland’s principle of military non-alignment. The parties opposing such concept are VAS, which strongly opposed developments that do not go in the direction of a social Europe (see section 3.2.6.1), as well as the anti-CFSP KD and PS.

3.3.4. Vanhanen II / Kiviniemi (19 April 2007 – 22 June 2011)

Figure 3.5 Composition of the Eduskunta following the 2007 election, per seats



Source: Sundberg (2008).

The 2007 general election held on 18 March marked a major switch to the right, with both left-wing parties being defeated (SDP lost eight seats compared to 2003 and VAS lost two). KOK, on the other hand, was considered as the winner of this election, gaining a total of 50 seats (+10) and becoming the second largest party represented in parliament. PS (+2), RKP (+1) and VIHR (+1) also made substantial gains in this election. Vanhanen, as leader of the largest political party (KESK, who nevertheless lost four seats compared to 2003), was again put in charge of cabinet formation and chose to create a non-socialist surplus majority coalition with KOK, VIHR and RKP, leaving the Social Democratic Party in the opposition for the first time since 1995. Interestingly enough, the government had a left-wing ideology, according to its value on Kim and Fording’s index of

government partisanship (-25.3). As such, this government stands out as the only non-centrist cabinet in Finland throughout the period analysed in this study. On 22 June 2010, Vanhanen stepped down as KESK party leader and Prime Minister, replaced by former Minister for Local Government Mari Kiviniemi who took the lead until the end of the parliamentary term in 2011.

In terms of European integration policy, the new government programme mostly dealt with the issue of foreign policy. As outlined by Sundberg (2008: 971), “the government committed itself to enhancing Finnish readiness to participate in international crisis management by intensifying co-operation in the use of military and civil resources, and full participation in a joint EU security and crisis management co-operation”. Accordingly, the Vanhanen II/Kiviniemi government agreed to continue participation in the EU Battle Groups scheme and to participate in the Nordic Battle Group for two periods: the first semester of 2008 and, later on, the first semester of 2011 (Kerttunen 2005). Whereas no parliamentary vote was held for participation in the NBG in 2008, a consultative vote took place on 10 December 2010 for Finland’s second participation in 2011. This vote is developed in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9 Eduskunta’s vote on participation in the Nordic Battle Group during the first semester of 2011, per party⁸³

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Absentions /absents
KOK	50	44	0	6
SDP	45	35	1	9
KESK	50	35	0	15
KD	7	6	0	1
VAS	17	0	14	3
VIHR	14	11	0	3
PS	6	5	0	1
RKP	10	6	0	4
TOTAL	199	142	15	42

Source: Eduskunta’s archives.

This vote was relatively similar to the previous one that took place in 2006 (see Table 3.8) and did not reflect divisions between the government and the opposition. An overwhelming majority of the MPs voted in favour of Finland’s participation in the NBG,

⁸³ The number of MPs per party slightly differs from Figure 3.5 due to one defection (Markku Uusipaavalniemi, originally from KESK, joined PS). The Speaker of the parliament was Sauli Niinistö (KOK).

with VAS being the only party opposed to this policy, jointly with one SDP representative. Somewhat surprisingly, in contrast to the 2006 vote and despite being anti-CFSP parties, the Christian Democrats and the Finns Party also supported such participation. This could be explained by the fact that Nordic co-operation is considered as one of the main priorities of both parties in terms of foreign and security policy: as such, the fact that the NBG takes place within the framework of the European Union did not seem to influence the attitudes of both parties on such policy.

3.4. Conclusion

This empirical chapter has focused on Finland's relationship with the European Union and how it evolved through time. Its first section has demonstrated that Finland is the most integrated Nordic state, belonging to the 'inner core' of the EU and generally being a proactive rather a passive member state. In the second section, the well-established political parties' preferences on European integration were presented in detail. It has been demonstrated that a majority of these parties are rather in favour of European integration as a whole while there are no parties fully opposed to 'Europe', as they all agree that Finland should remain in the Union. The third section has analysed the various governments' composition as well as their positions on European integration, and provided an extensive analysis of parliamentary votes over major European policies (i.e. Finland's participation in the EEA, application for an EU membership, participation in the Schengen agreement, participation in the third stage of the EMU and participation in two EU Battle Groups). In order to answer the main research question of this thesis (*have Nordic government preferences on European integration been influenced by domestic political factors?*), and with regard to the hypotheses developed in Chapter 2, four main sets of conclusions can be drawn from Finland's European experience.

Each parliamentary vote analysed in this chapter showed a comfortable lead for governments' proposals for three main reasons. First, the absence of fully anti-integrationist parties in Finland favoured such positive attitudes towards European integration (Raunio 2005). Second, the parties that were broadly in favour of integration (i.e. KOK, SDP and RKP) were able to secure more than 50 per cent of the seats in parliament for each term showing that, in addition to the divided Centre Party, the majority of the Finnish parliament was generally composed of pro-European MPs. Third,

in all parliamentary terms analysed, the governments' share of MPs in parliament was superior to 50 per cent, de facto enabling the executive power to secure a positive outcome in the Eduskunta. For these motives, the case of Finland validates the first hypothesis explored within the framework of this study (i.e. *if there is a majority of pro-European integration parties in parliament, then the government will be in favour of deepening the country's relationship with the European Union*).

Furthermore, it appears that governments that were *not* composed of a majority of fully pro-integrationist parties could still be in favour of deepening Finland's relationship with the European Union. This is illustrated by the fact that the Aho I cabinet, which was strongly divided on the issue, submitted an application for an EU membership before the Eduskunta (see section 3.3.1). Similarly, *if a government was composed of a majority of pro-European integration parties, it would be in favour of deepening the country's relationship with the EU*, which would thus confirm the second hypothesis. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that all Finnish governments analysed in this study showed their willingness to be part of the 'inner core' of the European Union: the Finnish case does not offer any counter-example.

Unlike its Nordic neighbours, Finland has a strong tradition of *majority* governments. Between 1991 and 2010, governments consisted of surplus majority coalitions, i.e. coalitions from which a party can be removed without threatening its majority status. Due to the absence of minority cabinets, it is not possible to offer a detailed comparative analysis between different types of governments while only focusing on the case of Finland; however, it can be supposed that this tradition of majority government enabled the executive power to have more influence in terms European integration policy, as it was the case with the issue of participation in the EMU (see section 3.3.2.1). This would thus confirm hypothesis 4 stating that *a majority government will adopt a stronger position on European integration*.

Finally, in the case of Finland, it seems rather difficult to determine whether government ideology influenced its position on European integration. This is explained by the fact that there is a general consensus over European policies amongst Finnish political parties, enabling them to build broad coalitions and to avoid divisions on this issue (hence the 'Finnish model of government' suggested by Arter 1999). Furthermore, in a country with a strong tradition of surplus majority coalitions often cutting across the left-right political

spectrum, the governments' ideologies have tended to be more centre-oriented than in countries with minority or one-party coalitions, as demonstrated by their values on Kim and Fording's index of government partisanship (see Table 3.3). It thus appears that in the Finnish case, centre-oriented surplus majority governments strongly advocated European integration. The only non-centrist cabinets, Vanhanen II / Kiviniemi (-25.3 on Kim and Fording's index), still supported European integration, as illustrated through participation in the Nordic Battle Group. This would contradict the fifth hypothesis (i.e. *Government's support for European integration will decline as it moves further to either the left or the right*).

The next chapter will now focus on Finland's Western and more reluctant neighbour, Sweden.

Chapter 4. Sweden

4.1. Relations between Sweden and the European Union: a ‘Euro-outsider’⁸⁴ on the edge?

Like Finland, Sweden applied for an EU membership in the early 1990s and joined the Union on 1 January 1995. This accession was approved by the population in a narrow referendum held in November 1994, which saw 52.3 per cent of Swedes voting in favour of membership and with 46.8 per cent voting against (turnout of 83.3 per cent). However, since joining the European Union, the country has not followed the same path as its Eastern Nordic neighbour, remaining in the ‘outer core’ of the European Union and by *de facto*⁸⁵ opting out of the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union. This decision, first taken by the Persson government in 1997, was then submitted to the population in September 2003 through a referendum: 42 per cent of whom voted in favour of EMU membership, while 55.9 per cent voted against (with a turnout of 82.6 per cent).

This section briefly outlines the evolution of Sweden’s path to European integration, from its early days to the *de facto* opt-out of the EMU. The existing literature on the relationship between Sweden and the European Union is also discussed.

⁸⁴ A ‘Euro-outsider’ has been defined by Miles (2005a: 4) as “a country that is a full member of the EU, yet remains outside the euro-area and this has not adopted the euro”. This notion is preferred to ‘EMU-outsider’, as “those countries outside the euro do participate in the more general preparatory First and Second Stages of the EMU programme” (ibid.).

⁸⁵ In contrast to Denmark and the United Kingdom, Sweden has a legal obligation to join the Eurozone. Hence, this constitutes a *de facto* (and not *de jure*) opt-out (see e.g. Adler-Nissen 2009). From a legal perspective, the Swedish case for differentiated integration is thus rather difficult to defend.

Box 4.1 Timeline: Sweden's major steps towards integration

Date	Agreement
1949	Membership, Council of Europe
1960	Membership, European Free Trade Association
1973	Free trade agreement with the European Economic Community
1991	Application for European Union Membership
1994	Membership, European Economic Area
1995	Membership, European Union
1996	Membership, Schengen Area (implemented in 2001, jointly with the other Nordic states)
1997	Government's decision not to join the third stage of the EMU; membership subject to popular referendum at a later stage
2003	Referendum on participation to the third stage of the EMU, rejected by the population
2008	Participation in the Nordic Battle Group (ready for operations between January and June)
2011	Participation in the Nordic Battle Group (ready for operations between January and June)

As illustrated in Box 4.1, Sweden played a proactive role in European co-operation from its early days, being one of the founding members of the Council of Europe and the European Free Trade Association. Between 1961 and 1971, the positions taken by the Swedish government are particularly interesting.⁸⁶ Indeed, while being critical of full membership which was perceived as a threat to the policy of neutrality and the Swedish welfare state, the government actively tried to promote an early form of differentiated integration through *associate* membership of the (then) European Community. However, such possibilities never led to negotiations between the EC and Sweden, first as a consequence of de Gaulle's position on the issue of enlargement, and then due to divisions within the Commission and the Council. It should also be noted that between 1967 and 1970, Sweden considered joining the EC, "provided that there could be a solution to the neutrality problem" (Gustavsson 1998: 47-48). However, by 1971, the Social Democratic government no longer saw membership as a solution, mostly due to the EC's ambition to move further in a federalist direction following the Council's decision to accept the content of the Werner and Davignon reports (Gustavsson 1998; Lindahl and Naurin 2005). Consequently, rather than joining the EC or finding an agreement on some form of associate membership, Sweden signed a free trade agreement

⁸⁶ For more detailed discussions on the Swedish governments' positions on European co-operation between 1961 and 1971, see Miljan (1977); Karlsson (1995); Miles (1997); Gustavsson (1998); Gstöhl (2002).

with the EC in 1972, which was mostly seen as beneficial by both parties. In sum, Sweden remained in the inner periphery of the EU until 1995 for three main reasons: concerns over the principle of neutrality, and over the future of the welfare state; opposing the federalist direction taken by the Council, which can be referred to as ‘federio-scepticism’ (Miles 2001); and a reluctance from the EC to grant a status of associate member, which would have led to a very first case of formal differentiated integration.

Following the ratification of the free trade agreement, the question of European integration remained off the political agenda until the mid-1980s, with the ratification of the Single European Act in 1986 and plans to implement a Single Market by the end of 1992. In 1988, all parties represented in the Swedish Parliament, the Riksdag, reached a consensus on a declaration that paved the way for negotiations on what would become the European Economic Area (as discussed in section 2.2). Sweden thus played a proactive role in starting negotiations over the future EEA agreement.

In 1990, a severe economic crisis hit Sweden,⁸⁷ which led the government to adopt an unpopular package of austerity measures (Aylott 1997). As a result, the government released a press statement at the end of October 1990, calling for “a new decision by the Riksdag which more distinctly and in more positive wordings clarifies Sweden’s ambition to become a member of the European Community” (Gustavsson 1998: 66). The Social Democrat (single party) minority government, through Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson, eventually decided to formally apply for EC membership on 1 July 1991. Formal negotiations with Brussels started in February 1993 and were facilitated by the EEA agreement signed in 1992, similarly to the Finnish and Norwegian cases. It was also decided that a referendum on the issue of membership would take place once the accession treaty has been negotiated. Even though referendums in Sweden are technically only advisory, all political parties represented in the Riksdag agreed in advance to respect the outcome of the popular vote, regardless of their own views on this issue (ibid.). The referendum was eventually held on Sunday 13 November 1994, four weeks after the Finns’ decision to join the Union.

The main reason that led the government to apply for an EU membership was thus the deep economic recession that had hit the country (Johansson 2003), even though Prime

⁸⁷ For an analysis on the causes and consequences of the crisis, see Englund (1999).

Minister Carlsson never publicly admitted this to be the case (Arter 2008). However, the literature acknowledges three other contextual factors that were likely to play a role in shaping this position. The first one is related to the strongly held principle of neutrality,⁸⁸ which lost its main *raison d'être* following the end of the Cold War (Jerneck 1993; Mouritzen 1993; Sundelius 1994; Widfeldt 1996; Gustavsson 1998; Gstöhl 2002; Arter 2008). While this policy served national interests until the late 1980s by enabling the country to gain international prestige, the end of a two-block division implied an emergence of 'multipolarity', with the EU becoming an increasingly influential actor at the international stage. In the words of Gustavsson (1998: 96), "in the new situation, being neutral was no longer 'something to be', and this policy could no longer serve as a base for upholding Sweden's international position". By becoming a member of the European Union, Sweden could thus play a role in shaping common positions with other states sharing similar views in terms of foreign policy, and adapting itself to a new international environment by avoiding the risk of becoming a peripheral actor. The second contextual factor is linked to the poor prospects in the EEA negotiations: Sweden hoped that the negotiated agreement would give the possibility for EEA member states to shape decisions related to the Single European Market. However, it quickly appeared that the EFTA countries would suffer a lack of influence in the EEA. As a result, applying for full EU membership was seen as a 'better' solution in order to avoid being left in the periphery of the new Europe (Gustavsson 1998; Miles 2005b). The third factor which helps to explain the government's decision to apply for EU membership (and more especially the timing) is related to the electoral schedule. With the next general election looming on the horizon, "there was concern to avoid the potentially calamitous electoral costs of an enforced devaluation of the Swedish krona" (Arter 2008: 322). As a result, applying for EU membership shortly before the general election in September 1991 can also be understood as a strategic move to avoid a potential electoral disaster.

While looking at the Europeanisation of the nation-state, Miles (2001; 2005b) offers a very useful classification of the Swedish governments' positions on European integration following EU accession, both in terms of vertical (i.e. influencing developments at the

⁸⁸ It should be noted that unlike Finland (see previous chapter), the Swedish principle of neutrality was not a consequence of a special relationship with a particular state or block (i.e. the former USSR). As mentioned by Gustavsson (1998: 73), "Sweden's neutrality was never codified in any binding way or guaranteed by the great powers. Swedish policy-makers have instead emphasized flexibility arguing that 'we determine the policy of neutrality ourselves'".

supranational level), and horizontal (i.e. adopting EU policies at the domestic level) integration. In his views, the Swedish adaptation to full EU membership can be divided into four periods:

- Period A (1995-1997) which constitutes a ‘reactive shock’ during which Swedish governments “were largely concerned with securing EU acceptance of those policy issues raised by Sweden, but not subsequently accepted by the Union, during the 1993-1994 accession negotiations”;
- Period B (1997-1999) referred to as ‘breakthrough’, “represents the time when the vast majority of the Swedish political elite or state abandoned any pretensions towards EU-scepticism (on full membership status) and became further Europeanised”;
- Period C (1999-2000) of ‘positive adjustment’ is characterised by “movement on the part of the leading political actors – most notably the Social Democratic government” towards a more proactive European policy”;
- And Period D (2001) coinciding with the Swedish EU Council Presidency, which enabled the government to successfully “add a ‘Swedish accent’ to the Union’s agenda for six months” (Miles 2001: 316-326, 2005b: 189-208).

During these four periods as well as from 2002 onwards, two major areas constituted ‘policy dilemmas’⁸⁹ for the Swedish government: defence and participation in the third stage of the EMU. Participation in Schengen did also constitute a dilemma during period A, before the government (and parliament) effectively opted into this policy together with all other Nordic countries. In addition, “Sweden’s approaches to EU affairs during the first years of membership can be characterised as largely reactive rather than pro-active and anticipatory” (Johansson 2003: 382). This constitutes a strong contrast to Finland’s attitudes towards integration.⁹⁰ Such signs of reluctance have mostly been explained by the discrepancy between public opinion and that of the political elites, which also

⁸⁹ In the words of Miles (2001: 311; 2005b: 180), a ‘policy dilemma’ occurs where “the priority of Swedish government in these policy areas is to overtly ‘defend’ and usually ‘protect’ national interests, even if this requires Sweden to be placed on the periphery of EU development” (see also Johansson 2003).

⁹⁰ Sweden’s attitude towards European integration (and more especially the EMU) has also been analysed by Miles (2004: 156) using the metaphor of a ‘hitchhiker’ which is, in his words, “a Sweden (or perhaps more accurately Sweden’s governing political elite) that wishes to respond positively to the establishment of the European single currency [...] yet for largely domestic political reasons [...] is unready to commit fully to participation in the evolving euro area at the time”.

constitutes a particular characteristic in Swedish domestic politics. Indeed, while there are clear indications of a consensus over deepening European integration, especially amongst the elected representatives, the views of the general population have consistently showed signs of reluctance (see e.g. Lindahl 2000; Miles 2001; Johansson 2003; Aylott 2005; Lindahl and Naurin 2005). Such division between the population and the political elites has given the country a ‘twin face’, with governments employing what has been named as the ‘politics of low visibility’: “[a] quiet networking and a ‘best in class’ behaviour in Brussels has been combined with a low degree of Europeanisation of the domestic political debate” (Lindahl and Naurin 2005: 67). In short, the Swedes’ strong mass-level Euroscepticism should not be ignored when looking at government positions on European integration, especially in the years immediately following membership acquisition. This gap is best exemplified by the national debate on EMU membership, which will be outlined in section 4.3.4.

While the existing literature has mostly focused on these contextual elements in order to explain Sweden’s reluctance, few studies discuss some of the common domestic political variables which are the centre of attention for this thesis (Aylott 2005; Lindahl and Naurin 2005). The next section analyses the Swedish party system and outlines the positions of each party on (differentiated) European integration.

4.2. The Swedish party system and European integration

As Norway, Sweden is a constitutional monarchy, a parliamentary democracy, and a unitary state. Since 1971, 349 representatives are elected in the unicameral Riksdag.⁹¹ MPs are elected for a period of four years.⁹² Until the late 1980s, the Swedish multi-party system had a series of distinctive characteristics, outlined by Bergström (1991: 8). First, it has been “the simplest in any of the democracies”, due to the importance of the basic left-right scale to account for party structure and electoral behaviour (see e.g. Aylott 2002). Second, it has been “one of the most ‘frozen’” systems, with five party families constituting its core (namely the Communists, the Social Democrats, the Liberals, the Conservatives and the Agrarians), which reflects Berglund and Lindström’s (1978) five-

⁹¹ The Swedish upper chamber (*första kammaren*) has been abolished in 1971 (Aylott *et al.* 2013).

⁹² Between 1970 and 1994, however, representatives were elected for a period of three years.

party Scandinavian system (see section 1.2). Third, the Social Democratic Party (*Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti*, SAP) has historically been the dominant party, and much more so than in compared Sweden's neighbours. While the latter characteristic managed to remain salient until recent years, the 1988 and 1991 general elections witnessed a substantial change to the traditional structure of the party system, which moved it from a five- to a seven-to-eight-party set with the introduction of the Green, Christian Democratic and (most recently) Right-Wing Populist party families all gaining seats in the Riksdag. It should also be noted that since the mid-1960s, the party system has traditionally been divided into two main blocs, a socialist (or red-greens) versus a non-socialist (nicknamed 'the Alliance', *Alliansen*; see further section 4.3.5), and which have more recently constituted more or less formal pre-election coalitions (Allern and Aylott 2009; Bergman and Bolin 2011; Aylott *et al.* 2013). While a similar two-bloc structure also exists in Norway, it is not present in Finland, where instead the three 'big' parties (i.e. the National Coalition Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Centre Party) have governed together despite their ideological divergences.

As with the previous chapter on Finland, the aim of this section is to analyse the position of the well-established Swedish parties towards European integration. In the Swedish case, the period analysed starts in 1990, when the EU issue became a much more salient question under the Carlsson II cabinet, and finishes at the end of 2010, when the parliament voted in favour of participating for the second time in the Nordic Battle Group. Since 1990, seven parties have consistently managed to secure seats in the Riksdag: the conservative Moderate Party (*Moderata samlingspartiet*, M); the Social Democratic Party; the agrarian Centre Party (*Centerpartiet*, C); the Liberal People's Party (*Folkpartiet Liberalerna*, FP); the Christian Democrats (*Kristdemokraterna*, KDS);⁹³ and two 'new politics' parties: the Left Party (*Vänsterpartiet*, Vp), belonging to the socialist left party family; and the Green Party (*Miljöpartiet de Gröna*, MdG).⁹⁴ In addition, two populist right parties have been represented in the Riksdag: the short-lived New Democracy (*Ny Demokrati*, NyD), which secured 25 seats in 1991 before disappearing from the political

⁹³ The Christian Democratic Party of Sweden is usually shortened as 'KD'; however, as such acronym has already been used for the Finnish Christian Democratic Party and in order to avoid confusion, the initials 'KDS' are used in this analysis.

⁹⁴ The Green Party is commonly named *Miljöpartiet* and shortened as 'MP'; however, as such acronym has already been used for the term 'member of parliament', the initials 'MdG' are used in this analysis.

scene three years later,⁹⁵ and the Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*, SD), which gained 20 seats in 2010. Even though, at the time of writing, the latter is represented in the Riksdag and might become a well-established party in the future, it has not been included in for this study due to its young history in parliament and the minor role it has so far played in Swedish politics.

Table 4.1 Percentage vote for Swedish political parties in parliamentary elections, from 1988 to 2010

	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010
Moderate Party (M)	18.3	21.9	22.4	22.9	15.3	26.2	30.1
Social Democratic Party (SAP)	43.2	37.7	45.3	36.4	39.8	35.0	30.7
Centre Party (C)	11.3	8.5	7.7	5.1	6.2	7.9	6.6
Liberal People's Party (Fp)	12.2	9.1	7.2	4.7	13.4	7.5	7.1
Christian Democrats (KDS)	2.0	7.1	4.1	11.8	9.1	6.6	5.6
Left Party (Vp)	(5.8) ¹	4.5	6.2	12.0	8.4	5.8	5.6
Green Party (MdG)	5.5	3.4	5.0	4.5	4.6	5.2	7.3
Others	0.7	7.8	2.2	2.6	3.1	5.7	7.0
Turnout	86	86.7	86.8	81.4	80.1	82.0	84.6

Source: Sainsbury (1989); Pierre and Widfeldt (1992; 1999); Widfeldt and Pierre (1995); Widfeldt (2003a; 2007; 2011).

¹ Running under the name of Left Communists (*Vänsterpartiet kommunisterna*, VPK) – see section 4.2.6.1.

Table 4.1 gives an overview of the electoral score for the seven well-established parties in the general elections held between 1988 and 2010. This confirms the trends outlined above. Throughout the period in question, SAP has been the largest party, with a comfortable lead on the second largest party, the Moderate Party, even though the strength of the Social Democrats has started to decline progressively from 2006 onwards.

4.2.1. Conservative Party

The centre-right Moderate Party (sometimes referred to as ‘Conservative Party’; see for instance Gustavsson 1998; Arter 2008; Bergman and Bolin 2011) was founded in 1904

⁹⁵ New Democracy was formally dissolved in 2000, following three unsuccessful elections in 1994, 1995 (European parliamentary elections) and 1998.

under the name of General Electoral League (*Allmänna valmansförbundet*) as a response to the rise of the Social Democrats and the Liberals. The Conservatives have historically competed against the ideologically close Liberals and Agrarians to become the largest non-socialist party in Sweden. This position has been secured since 1979, making M the second largest party in the Riksdag. It closely co-operates with Swedish non-socialist parties, i.e. the Centre Party, the Liberal People's Party and the Christian Democrats, through the 'Alliance' as introduced in the previous section. Between 1988 and 2010, the party secured between 15.3 per cent (in 2002) and 30.1 per cent (in 2010) of the votes, and participated in all three non-socialist coalition governments. At the European level, M is part of the European People's Party.

As its Finnish and Norwegian sister parties, M is broadly and almost unanimously supportive of European integration, even though the party does not support a federalist vision of Europe (Johansson and Raunio 2001; Miles 2005b). Even before the European issue became salient in the late 1980s, the party has consistently and almost unanimously been in favour of participating in the process of European integration, jointly with the Liberals (see section 4.2.4). In 1988, the party manifesto mentioned that "Sweden must be part of building the new Europe"⁹⁶ and "should not be an isolated corner of Europe"⁹⁷ (Moderata samlingspartiet 1988) without explicitly calling for membership as such due to the (rather fragile) consensus that prevailed amongst the parties represented in parliament over the EEA negotiations. However, during the summer of 1990, the party expressively urged the government to apply for an EU membership and thereby put pressure on the ruling Social Democratic Party, which did not consider this option as viable until October 1990 (Gustavsson 1998). Following Sweden's accession to the EU, the party supported developments at the European level, including the strengthening of the CFSP as well as full Swedish participation in all EU policies, including Schengen and the EMU (Moderata samlingspartiet 1998).⁹⁸ In other words, the Moderate Party wanted to see Sweden belong to the 'inner core' of the European Union, jointly with Finland, until the population rejected participation in the Eurozone in 2003. Since then, even though its leadership is still pro-EMU, the party has become more passive on this issue. The 2010 Alliance

⁹⁶ Author's translation: "Sverige måste vara med och bygga det nya Europa".

⁹⁷ Author's translation: "Vårt land får inte bli ett isolerat hörn av Europa".

⁹⁸ It should be noted that there were some minor intra-party divisions on participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union, with some Conservatives campaigning for the No-side in the 2003 referendum campaign (Arter 2008; Aylott *et al.* 2013).

manifesto, common to the Moderate, Centre, Liberal People's and Christian Democratic parties, stated that "a potential future Swedish EMU membership must be preceded by a referendum. The timing of such must be decided by the Parliament. A referendum should only take place after broad discussions in which the pros and cons are tested in the light of, amongst others, experiences and developments in countries inside and outside the Eurozone" (Alliansen 2010).⁹⁹

In sum, the Moderate Party is a strongly pro-integrationist party in Sweden, and has always campaigned for Sweden to be part of the 'inner core' of the Union. As such, M does not want to promote horizontal differentiated integration, and ultimately wants Sweden to participate in the third stage of the EMU.

4.2.2. Social Democratic Party

Founded in 1889, the Swedish Social Democratic Party is the oldest and largest political party in the country. However, it appears that the Social Democratic hegemony in Sweden has eroded in recent years, as demonstrated by the evolution of the party's electoral score throughout the period analysed, falling from 45.3 per cent in 1994 to 30.7 per cent in 2010.¹⁰⁰ Despite being ideologically close to the Left Party and, more recently, the Greens, SAP generally governed alone when it was not in the opposition, forming single party minority governments usually with the support of other left-oriented parties in parliament (see section 4.3). The party is furthermore represented in the European Parliament in the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats.

As a consequence of being a relatively large and heterogeneous party, SAP has faced major difficulties to manage the European issue since the late 1980s. Broadly speaking, the left-wing of the party has been more opposed to European integration than the right-wing has, and its leadership is known to be more pro-European than the average party member is (Johansson and Raunio 2001). In the 1988 general election, for example, the party's slogan was 'Sweden is unique' (*Sverige är unikt*), aiming to emphasise the divergences

⁹⁹ Author's translation: "Ett eventuellt framtida svenskt inträde i valutaunionen måste föregås av en folkomröstning. Tidpunkten för en sådan måste beslutas av riksdagen. En folkomröstning bör genomföras först efter en bred diskussion där för- och nackdelar på nytt prövas i ljuset av bland annat erfarenheter och utveckling i länderna i och utanför eurosamarbetet".

¹⁰⁰ On the reasons of the Social Democratic decline, see Arter (2008; 2012).

between the Swedish welfare system and those of the EC countries (Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti 1988; Sainsbury 1993; Aylott 1997). The party nevertheless favoured negotiations on the future EEA agreement. The economic crisis of the early 1990s, however, ‘forced’ the Social Democratic leadership to consider applying for an EU membership and thus to activate an internal debate over this issue, which had not been discussed throughout the year. In order to avoid a split as has occurred within its Norwegian counterpart, the SAP leadership successfully adopted a strategy of compartmentalisation, which consisted of four steps: first, while being in power, the Social Democrats took the decision to let the population decide on the issue through a referendum, leading the party to avoid taking a collective decision; second, it did not sanction the EU opponents within its organization, thus breaking with the usual norms of party discipline; third, in addition to tolerating divergences over this issue, the party also appointed senior anti-membership figures to its leadership; and finally, SAP lobbied to organise the referendum directly after the 1994 general election, with the aim of keeping this issue out of the traditional election campaigns (Aylott 1997; 2002; Miles 2005b; Aylott *et al.* 2013; see also section 4.3.2). The leadership eventually adopted a positive attitude towards an EU membership following a vote at the party congress (Pierre and Widfeldt 1995), but let its anti-EU faction campaign against membership in compliance with the compartmentalisation strategy (Aylott 2008). Following the referendum result, the party’s unity was preserved and in subsequent manifestos, it reiterated its federo-sceptic stance by stating, e.g., that supranational decision-making “must be limited to what strictly requires supranationalism. Otherwise, the distance becomes too big between the population and their elected representatives” (Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti 1998).¹⁰¹

Due to the policy of neutrality, SAP was initially reluctant to support developments in the Common Foreign and Security Policy. However, during the period of positive adjustment (1999-2000, see section 4.1), the party had also started to raise this issue and support such developments, especially in terms of crisis management and the defence of human rights (Miles 2005b). Accordingly, from 2002 onwards, the manifestos began to emphasise the party’s positive attitude towards developments in the CFSP.

¹⁰¹ Author’s translation: “Det överstatliga beslutsfattandet i EU behövs. Men det måste begränsas till det som oundgängligen kräver överstatlighet. I annat fall blir avståndet för stort mellan folk och folkvalda.”

While the party had unanimously supported participation in Schengen, the issue of EMU membership was even more controversial than that of the EU membership itself. SAP was strongly divided and constrained by contextual factors related to domestic politics. As a consequence, the party announced in 1997 (while in office) its opposition to Sweden being part of the first wave entrants, before switching its position at the 2000 party Congress, where a majority of party representatives voted in favour of joining the EMU third stage. When the issue became politically salient again in 2002 (due to a rather positive political context, further explored in section 4.3.4), the party did once again adopt a strategy of compartmentalisation which, this time, was unsuccessful. Even though the party leadership (through Prime Minister and Party Leader Göran Persson) had once again called for a ‘Yes’ vote, more than half of its electorate voted against. The decision of SAP to raise the EMU membership issue in 2002 is considered as a contextual miscalculation on behalf of the leadership (Aylott 2005).

In a nutshell, while SAP’s official party line, since the early 1990s, supports the European Union, it has been rather divided over participation in certain policy areas, as illustrated by the EMU example. This can be mostly explained by the size of the party, which often formed single party minority governments throughout the 20th century.

4.2.3. Agrarian Party

The agrarian Centre Party was founded in 1913 as the Farmers’ League (*Bondeförbundet*), before changing its name in 1957. Located very much at the centre-right of the traditional left-right scale, C has participated in the most recent non-socialist governments, being ideologically close to the Liberals; however, the party also has historic ties with SAP (Elder and Gooderham 1978) and has occasionally supported single party minority governments led by the Social Democrats.¹⁰² During the period analysed, the party’s electoral results fluctuated between 5.1 per cent (in 1998) and 11.3 per cent (in 1988). In the European Parliament, the party is affiliated to ALDE.

¹⁰² As mentioned by an interviewee, the Centre Party is “a neo-liberal green party” and the Social Democratic Party is a “Red Socialist party. So we do not find much to agree on anymore” (Interview with a spokesperson from the Centre Party, 7 April 2014).

While the other Swedish centre-right parties did not encounter any major difficulties in managing the European issue, the Centre Party's experience rather diverges. Indeed, the party has been divided on this issue, both within the leadership and within the electorate, and a small organised anti-EU faction has operated within the party from 1992 onwards (Aylott 2008). Similarly to its Finnish and Norwegian sister parties, the party has strongly defended national neutrality in its broadest sense due to its agrarian base (Aylott *et al.* 2013). Nevertheless, the party leadership supported the EEA agreement, the government's decision to apply for an EU membership in 1990 as well as the accession treaty in 1994. The party was somewhat critical of the latter agreement, especially in terms of respect of the principle of neutrality and agricultural policies. Like most other parties in Sweden, C has advocated for intergovernmentalism rather than for supranationalism (Johansson and Raunio 2001). Furthermore, the 1994 manifesto stipulated that should Sweden join the EU, the Centre Party would ensure that the country "[...] is not part of a common defence and that Sweden can stand outside the common currency" (Centerpartiet 1994).¹⁰³ In other words, the party wanted to promote differentiated integration by opting out of the CFSP and the EMU. This support for differentiation is still present nowadays, as stated by an interviewee: "we would like to see different types of integration within Europe. We could have a multi-core Union so to speak. So more integration on some issues but less integration on some others".¹⁰⁴

Although the Centre Party has progressively started to support a Swedish participation in the CFSP (especially regarding peacekeeping operations led by the European Union) from 1998 onwards, it did not change its stance towards participation in the third stage of the EMU. Indeed, C argued, e.g., that Eurozone membership would lead to increased supranationalism, which would go against the party's ideology (Centerpartiet 1998). The party also campaigned for the No-side in 2003, being the only centre-right party to oppose an EMU membership. Even though the party has remained opposed participation to the Monetary Union, its position on Europe has evolved into one that is increasingly pro-integrationist: "[i]n the 2004 European election, it went so far as to advocate 'federalism' in Europe, albeit a version that would involve a 'leaner but sharper' Union" (Aylott *et al.*

¹⁰³ Author's translation: "Om svenska folket beslutar om medlemskap skall vi säkerställa att Sverige kan behålla sin alliansfrihet i fred syftande till neutralitet i krig, att Sverige inte ingår i ett gemensamt försvar samt att Sverige kan stå utanför en gemensam valuta."

¹⁰⁴ Interview with a spokesperson from the Centre Party, 7 April 2014.

2013: 161). As mentioned by an interviewee, “we have a different view on what federalism is compared to some other parties, especially Folkpartiet. For us, a federal union would mean that there is less power on the EU level and more power at the state level and for local governments. That is really important to us”.¹⁰⁵

In sum, within the context of European integration, “the vacillating position of the party reflects a cost-benefit analysis for the agricultural sector as a whole, with many small-scale farmers suffering from increased competition in the EU” (Johansson and Raunio 2001: 243).

4.2.4. Liberal Party

The Liberal People’s Party of Sweden was created in 1934 and is currently one of the four well-established centre-right parties represented in the Riksdag. Ideologically close to the Centre Party,¹⁰⁶ Fp also co-operates with other Swedish centre-right parties through the Alliance and participated in the three non-socialist governments throughout the period analysed. Between 1988 and 2010, its electoral performance fluctuated between 4.7 per cent in 1998 and 13.4 per cent in 2002. The party is represented in the European Parliament under ALDE.

The Liberal People’s Party’s position towards European co-operation has been even more positive than the one adopted by the Moderate Party. Indeed, while the Conservatives show some (minor) signs of division over participation in the Eurozone, the Liberals are united in their pro-integrationist approach to the Union. Furthermore, Fp advocates a federal Europe, while M has come to defend the intergovernmentalist vision. However, as noted by Johansson and Raunio (2001: 243), the party adapted itself to the Eurosceptic public opinion and “the most federalist notions were dropped”. Nevertheless, party manifestos adopted from 1991 onwards are broadly pro-integrationist: the party wants Sweden to belong to the ‘inner core’ of the European Union, with full participation in all policy areas, including the CFSP, the AFSJ and the EMU. The party has also called for a liberalisation of the Common Agricultural Policy but without rejecting it. While the 2006

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ “We are a party that is part of the Alliance, and historically we have had an especially close relationship with the Centre Party” (Interview with a former spokesperson from the Liberal People’s Party, 11 April 2014).

manifesto avoided mentioning participation in the Eurozone (following the referendum result of 2003),¹⁰⁷ the issue reappeared in 2010 with the manifesto mentioning that “Sweden should introduce the euro as currency. Another referendum should be held in the next term” (Folkpartiet liberalerna 2010).¹⁰⁸ In sum, Fp can be considered as the most pro-integrationist party in Sweden, and does not consider differentiated integration as a viable option for the country.

4.2.5. Christian Democratic Party

Founded in 1964, the Christian Democrats is the youngest party of its kind in the Nordic region. While the party remained marginal in its early years, it managed to gain its first parliamentary seat in the 1985 election by joining forces with the Centre Party, before losing it three years later (Karvonen 1993). However, since 1991, KDS has been represented in the Riksdag, with an electoral score fluctuating between 4.1 per cent (in 1994) and 11.8 per cent (in 1998). The party is thus well-established on the Swedish political scene and has actively participated in the European debate from the early 1990s onwards. As a centre-right party, the Christian Democrats participated in all non-socialist coalition governments since 1991. Similarly to its Finnish sister party, KDS is member of the European People’s Party in the European Parliament.

Even though the party leadership came to be in favour of European integration when the issue arose in the early 1990s,¹⁰⁹ its voters have generally been more sceptical (Johansson and Raunio 2001). As early as 1991, the party manifesto stressed that EU membership is the expression “of an ideological connection to the ideas of peace and solidarity in Europe” (Kristdemokraterna 1991).¹¹⁰ The party subsequently campaigned in favour of the Yes-side in the 1994 referendum, despite some signs of internal divisions. Such

¹⁰⁷ This has been explained by an interviewee as such: “It was an issue of respecting the referendum of course. What we said is that we respect this referendum, but we will call for a referendum again sometime in the future. [...] It is not a question of immediate policy. If it was not part of the manifesto, then my guess is that the manifesto probably touched upon more immediate issues when it comes to European policies” (ibid.).

¹⁰⁸ Author’s translation: “Sverige ska införa euron som valuta. En ny folkomröstning bör därför hållas under nästa mandatperiod”.

¹⁰⁹ It should be noted that the party’s position on European integration has been strongly influenced by Alf Svensson, who was the leader of the Christian Democrats between 1973 and 2004 and a renowned pro-European figure in Sweden (Miles 2005b).

¹¹⁰ Author’s translation: “betona EG-medlemskapet som uttryck för en ideologisk anslutning till tanken på fred och samhörighet i Europa”.

divisions eventually led to the creation of an organised anti-EU faction within the party, named 'Christian Democrats for an Alternative EU Policy' (*Kristdemokrater för en Alternativ Europapolitik*; Aylott 2008).

The party's position regarding participation in the third stage of the EMU has evolved over time. In 1997 and 1998, the party congress initially argued that Sweden was not ready to be amongst the first wave entrants in the Eurozone (Widfeldt 2000b); but, by December 1999, the party had changed its position and decided to support EMU participation after all. This position was then retained by the party leadership during the 2003 referendum campaign, despite some minor internal divisions (Miles 2005b). Following the outcome of this referendum, participation in the Eurozone was left off the party manifestos.

Besides this switch regarding participation in the Eurozone, the party has consistently been in favour of deepening Sweden's relationship with the European Union and has not seen differentiated integration to be an option for the country. Participation in the CFSP was perceived to be positive by KDS, which further wants to make the European Union a strong peace-making and peacekeeping force (Kristdemokraterna 2002; 2006).

In conclusion, and unlike its Finnish sister party who is one of the most reluctant parties of the country (see previous chapter), KDS can be considered as a pro-integrationist party, even though less pro-European its centre-right partners in the Alliance, namely the Moderate Party and the Liberal People's Party.

4.2.6. 'New Politics' Parties

As in Finland and Norway, two 'new' parties emerged in the late 1980s, and became well established in the Swedish party system from the early 1990s onwards: the Left Party, and the Greens. However, these two parties do not share the same history, nor positions, on European co-operation with their respective Finnish sister parties.

4.2.6.1. Socialist Left Party

While the Finnish Socialist Left party (the Left Alliance) was founded in the early 1990s as an answer to foreign policy issues, the Left Party is the direct continuation of the former Swedish Social Democratic Left Party (*Sveriges socialdemokratiska vänsterparti*), founded in 1917, which became the Swedish Communist Party (*Sveriges kommunistiska parti*) in 1921 and was renamed the Left-Communists (*Vänsterpartiet kommunisterna*, VPK) in 1967 (Christensen 1998; Arter 2008). Following the Revolutions of 1989, the party has formally adopted the more moderate name of the “Left Party” in 1990, breaking away from its communist past; yet it remains the most left-oriented party represented in the Riksdag (Arter 2002). Despite the fact that Vp was never represented at the executive level, it has historically been linked to SAP and has largely supported most of the latter’s single party minority governments. Throughout the period analysed, the Left Party’s electoral performance oscillated between 4.5 per cent (in 1991) and 12 per cent (in 1998). At the European level, the party is represented in the European United Left/Nordic Green Left parliamentary group.

Throughout its existence, the Left Party stated its (almost) unanimous opposition to European co-operation. Already in 1972, the party rejected the Free Trade Agreement with the European Economic Community which was seen as benefiting big capital against the people (Christensen 1998). Already in 1988, and before the issue of EU membership became salient, the party manifesto stated that Sweden should not join the Union for two main reasons: first, the European Community “has been established to strengthen the position of capitalism in Western Europe”¹¹¹; and second, Vp advocates “a policy towards Europe from a pan-European perspective, tending to dissolve the military, political and economic blocs”¹¹² (Vänsterpartiet 1988). The party also stated its opposition to the EEA agreement in their 1991 manifesto which implied, according to the party, the erosion of Swedish legislation and welfare policy (Vänsterpartiet 1991). Despite the electorate’s decision to join the European Union via referendum, and a statement according to which the party respected the verdict in 1994 (Christensen 1998), it has remained anti-Europe and wants Sweden to leave the European Union as soon as possible (see e.g.

¹¹¹ Author’s translation: “EG har tillkommit för att stärka kapitalismens position i Västeuropa.”

¹¹² Author’s translation: “Vi bör föra en politik gentemot Europa utifrån ett alleuropeiskt perspektiv, som strävar mot att lösa upp militära politiska och ekonomiska blockbildningar.”

Vänsterpartiet 1998; 2002).¹¹³ It is thus fair to consider the Left Party as an anti-integrationist, as it opposes any kind of institutionalised European co-operation.

Why has the Left Party been so opposed to European co-operation? The answer, according to Johansson and Raunio (2001: 242), lies in the domestic political context and in their electoral strategies: “the leftists have skillfully exploited the reservoir provided by Eurosceptical public opinion. Having never been in government, the party has a freer position than a governing party”. In other words, it could be assumed that the Left Party uses the European issue as ‘the politics of opposition’ (Sitter 2001) in order to catch as many votes as possible in a country where mass-level Euroscepticism is relatively strong.

4.2.6.2. Green Party

The Swedish Green Party was formally founded in 1981, following a national referendum on nuclear power held in 1980 (Bennulf and Holmberg 1990). However, its roots can be traced back to the late 1960s, when new social movements dedicated to the protection of the environment were founded. While environmental issues constitute the main *raison d’être* of the party, MdG also emphasises issues such as cutting defence costs, equal income distribution and, more importantly within the framework of this thesis, opposition to European integration (Bennulf 1995). MdG is considered to be a largely centre-left party, ideologically closer to the Social Democratic Party, especially since 1998 when the party agreed to support the Persson government (Elander 2000; see further section 4.3.4.2). Like the Left Party, they have never been represented at the executive level but have supported SAP’s single party minority governments on several occasions. Between 1988 and 2010, MP received between 3.4 per cent (in 1991) and 7.3 per cent (in 2010) of votes. In the European Parliament, the party is part of the Greens-European Free Alliance group.

Together with the Left Party, MdG shares the ‘anti-Europe’ platform in Swedish politics. The party heavily campaigned against the EEA agreement and EU membership in the early 1990s. Using the motto “Yes to Europe – No to the EC” (*Ja till Europa – Nej till EG*) in 1991, the Greens considered that market liberalisation, the use of supranationalism and

¹¹³ Aylott *et al.* (2013), however, emphasises that even though such policy remains in the party programme, it does not constitute a key priority of the Left Party.

military co-operation were the main reasons for why an EU membership should be rejected. In contrast to Vp, however, the party supported a form of European co-operation on environmental issues as well as on the freedom to travel, study, and work (Miljöpartiet de Gröna 1991; 1994). The party has then gradually moved away from being in full opposition to an institutionalised European co-operation to taking up a softer stance and opposing participation in specific policy areas. In 2008, while still opposing EMU membership, developments in the CFSP¹¹⁴ and deepening European integration, the party removed the ‘withdrawal clause’ from its programme following an internal vote. Three reasons have been outlined to explain this switch in the party’s position on Europe. First, while opposition to the EU was initially perceived as an opportunity to increase electoral support (Miles 2005b), the Left Party has been more effective in gaining votes from the most Eurosceptic segment of the Swedish population, making such a platform less profitable for the Greens (Johansson and Raunio 2001). Second, the party has moved closer to the Social Democratic Party, being part of the so-called red-green parliamentary majority with the Left Party in 1998 and seeking to join the cabinet in subsequent elections: this encouraged the party leadership to take change its stance on European co-operation (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2013). Third, the party leadership (and especially Maria Wetterstrand and Peter Eriksson) was successful in convincing their voters to adopt a softer stance, with the aim of entering office in co-operation with the Social Democrats (Aylott *et al.* 2013). In sum, the party now supports EU membership as well as the current situation, with Sweden belonging to the ‘outer core’ of the European Union. According to MdG, differentiated integration is thus a viable option for Sweden.

¹¹⁴ A nuanced answer on the Green Party’s position on participation in the CFSP has been provided by an interviewee: “we are all in favour of EU states talking about foreign policy, co-ordinating foreign policy, trying to do things together, [...] we are very much in favour of keeping the veto for military actions, and we are very much in favour of the Swedish policy of military non-alignment. [...] We are in favour of the Common Foreign and Security Policy but we are very sceptical about the EU trying to force member states to have majority rules in decision-making when it comes to a common foreign policy, because [...] we are sceptical about whether there really is a common interest for all EU member states. Sometimes, it seems that there is no real Common Foreign and Security Policy, because the big states always act the way they want anyway. [...] The way the [CFSP] is designed today is a bit fuzzy, and it is not an optimal solution (Interview with a MP from the Green Party, 25 March 2014).

4.2.7. Party positions – summary

Table 4.2 Swedish parties' positions on participation in European integration (1991 – 2010), by selected policy area

	EU	EEA	CFSP	AFSJ	EMU
M	++	++	++	++	+
SAP	+	++	- (before 2002) + (after 2002)	+	- (before 2002) + (2002-2003) 0 (after 2003)
C	+	+	- (before 1998) + (after 1998)	+	--
Fp	++	++	++	++	++
KDS	+	++	++	++	- (before 1999) + (1999-2003) 0 (after 2003)
Vp	--	--	--	--	--
MdG	-- (before 2008) + (after 2008)	+	-- (before 2008) + (after 2008)	-- (before 2008) + (after 2008)	--

++ = official party line in favour of co-operation in this area, no internal divisions

+ = official party line in favour of co-operation in this area, internal divisions

0 = neutral or no official position on participation in this area

- = official party line opposed to co-operation in this area, internal divisions

-- = official party line opposed to co-operation in this area, no internal divisions

In a similarly vein to the preceding chapter on Finland, Table 4.2 offers a summary of Swedish parties' positions regarding European co-operation per policy area. There is a majority of pro-European integration parties, with the right-wing ones (the Liberal People's Party, the Moderate Party, the Christian Democrats and, to a lesser extent due to some internal divisions, the Centre Party as well) being the most supportive. However, the political weight of the Social Democratic Party, as historically the largest party represented in the Riksdag, cannot be underestimated and they have played an important role in shaping government positions on European integration. As demonstrated in section 4.2.2, SAP is, and has been, strongly divided on this issue, both within its leadership and within its membership base. As a consequence, the party has tried to avoid further irreversible divisions by adopting a strategy of compartmentalisation, which proved successful in 1994 but which somewhat failed in 2003. It should also be borne in mind that some parties have changed their official stance on some of the policy areas, as illustrated by KDS and SAP's preferences on participation in the third stage of the EMU. Furthermore, this section has demonstrated that the two most reluctant political parties, the Left and the Greens, do not necessarily share the same platform as their respective

sister parties in Finland. Furthermore, their main ‘coalition’ partner, SAP, has prevented both parties from joining the government. As a consequence and in an attempt to enter government in recent years, the Green Party has decided to soften its position on Sweden’s participation in European integration. In contrast, the Left Party has retained its strong anti-EU stance and is currently the only party in parliament that is opposed to institutionalised European co-operation.

The following section focuses on government positions on European integration for the past two decades, from the Carlsson II government (early 1990) to the second mandate of the Reinfeldt government.

4.3. Swedish governments and their positions on European integration

As outlined in the first section of this chapter, the analysis of the Swedish case starts in 1990, when the issue of EU membership became salient, especially under the Carlsson II cabinet. Throughout the period in question, a total of six general elections were held and five coalition governments were formed.

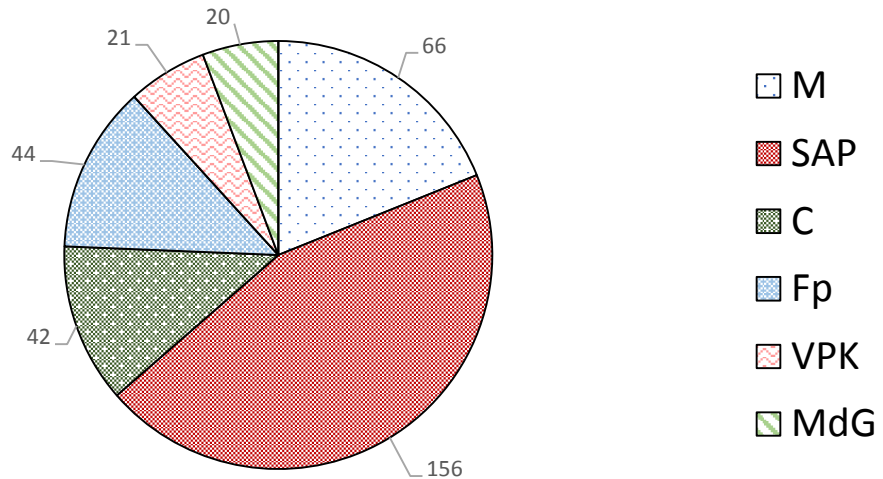
Table 4.3 gives an overview of the composition of these cabinets. As mentioned above, the Swedish party system has been divided into two blocs, socialist versus non-socialist, which constitute the two main competing government’s political orientations. While socialist (or centre-left) governments have tended to consist of single party cabinets led by successive Social Democratic Party leaders supported by other centre-left parties in the Riksdag, non-socialist (or centre-right) governments are coalitions consisting of the four main centre-right parties represented in parliament under the leadership of a Prime Minister coming from the largest political party in this block, the Moderate Party.

Table 4.3 List and characteristics of Swedish cabinets, 1990 – 2013

Dates	Cabinet	Party/parties included	Government position on a left-right scale (Kim and Fording index)	Percentage of government's share of MPs
27 February 1990 – 4 October 1991	Carlsson II	Social Democratic Party	-23.9	44.7
4 October 1991 – 7 October 1994	Bildt	Moderate Party Centre Party Liberal People's Party Christian Democrats	19.9	48.7
7 October 1994 – 22 March 1996	Carlsson III	Social Democratic Party	23.8	46.1
22 March 1996 – 6 October 1998	Persson, first mandate	Social Democratic Party	23.8	46.1
6 October 1998 – 30 September 2002	Persson, second mandate	Social Democratic Party	-3.5	37.5
30 September 2002 – 6 October 2006	Persson, third mandate	Social Democratic Party	-18.3	41.3
6 October 2006 – 5 October 2010	Reinfeldt, first mandate	Moderate Party Centre Party Liberal People's Party Christian Democrats	3.95	51
5 October 2010 –	Reinfeldt, second mandate	Moderate Party Centre Party Liberal People's Party Christian Democrats	1.2	49.6

4.3.1. Carlsson II (27 February 1990 – 4 October 1991)

Figure 4.1 Composition of the Riksdag following the 1988 election, per seats¹¹⁵



Source: Sainsbury (1989).

While a general election was held in Sweden in 1988 and led to the victory of the Social Democratic Party forming a single party left-wing minority government, the European membership issue only became salient in 1990 under the Carlsson II cabinet¹¹⁶ and did not constitute a ‘hot topic’ during the election campaign, despite being raised by the Moderate and Liberal People’s parties. Instead, the Carlsson I government reelected in 1988 committed itself to conduct negotiations over the future EEA agreement. However, the economic events of 1990 changed this situation, and the left-wing Social Democratic government decided to change its position on EU membership. On 12 December 1990, the Riksdag approved the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee’s report, according

¹¹⁵ As the European issue was not salient in 1988, this general election and the context surrounding it are not fully investigated. For an in-depth analysis, see e.g. Sainsbury (1989).

¹¹⁶ The Carlsson I cabinet, formed following the assassination of Social Democrat Prime Minister Olof Palme in March 1986, was renewed following the 1988 general election. It resigned on 9 February 1990 after the Swedish parliament voted down an emergency package to fight against the severe economic crisis that hit the country (see section 4.1). The Carlsson II cabinet was then formed on 27 February, with the support of the (then) Left Communists in the parliament. A new emergency package was then approved by the Riksdag on 5 April (Gustavsson 1998).

to which an application for EU membership could be submitted by the government in 1991. Based on a broad party consensus, this parliamentary decision stated:

Sweden should strive to become a member of the European Community, while maintaining its neutrality policy. Only as an EC member can our country fully participate in, and influence, European Community co-operation. After an overall assessment of foreign and security policy aspects, and after consultation in the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs, the government should be in a position to submit a Swedish application for membership. In the judgment of the Committee, this can occur during 1991 (quoted in Lindmarker 1991: 5; Bieler 1998: 204-205).

Table 4.4 Riksdag’s vote on submitting an application for European Union membership, per party

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
M	66	63	0	3
SAP	156	145	0	11
C	42	38	0	4
Fp	44	42	0	2
VPK	21	0	21	0
MdG	20	0	0	20
TOTAL	349	288	21	40

Source: Riksdag’s archives.

As Table 4.4 shows, a large majority of the MPs voted in favour of an EU membership, thus paving the way for the government to submit its application. The vote mostly followed each party’s official position, with M, SAP, C and Fp voting in favour and the Left party being opposed. All the Green MPs, despite being strongly opposed to such membership, abstained from voting. As both the Moderate Party and the Liberal People’s Party pleaded for full membership during the summer of 1990, the ruling Social Democratic Party could rely on a comfortable parliamentary majority to support its position. Following this vote and subsequent discussions during the first semester of 1991 (especially with regards to holding a referendum on this issue), the Carlsson II government formally submitted its application for EU membership on 1 July 1991.

As discussed in section 4.1, this switch in the government’s position has been mostly explained by four contextual factors: the economic crisis; the end of the Cold War; the poor prospects in the EEA negotiations; and the domestic political situation ahead of the following general election. Following this switch in SAP’s official position, the Riksdag

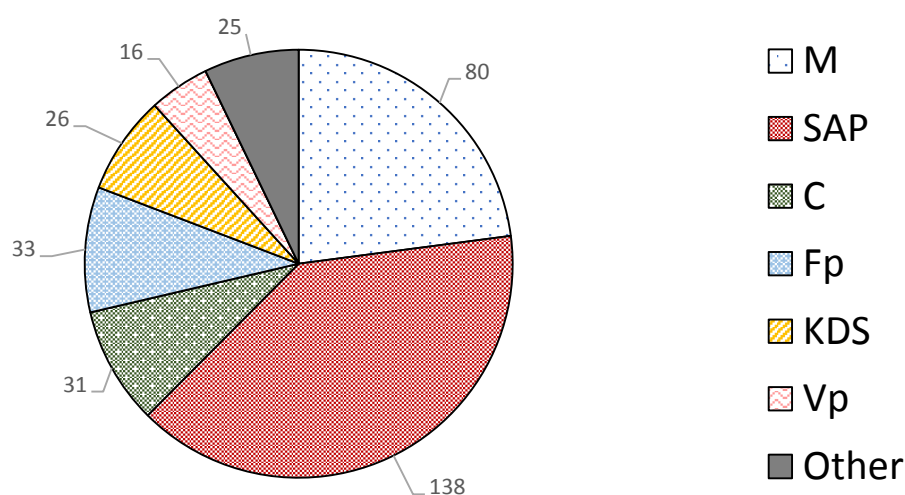
was composed of a majority of pro-EU parties, with M, Fp and the divided but still pro-EU C supporting this decision. The composition of parliament could thus have played a role in shaping the government's decision to apply for EU membership. In this case, the fact that Carlsson II was a minority government did not prevent it from putting the issue on top of its agenda: it is thus reasonable to assume that the aforementioned contextual factors were sufficiently important to take up such position.

Despite the application, however, negotiations on the future EEA agreement were still considered to be the main priority for the government, and the final agreement was to be discussed during the following parliamentary term.

4.3.2. Bildt (4 October 1991 – 7 October 1994)

The government's decision to formally apply for an EU membership on 1 July 1991 shaped the content of the 1991 general election campaign, which was held on 15 September. Together with the ongoing economic crisis and the reform of the taxation system, membership constituted a hot topic to present to the population (Pierre and Widfeldt 1992).

Figure 4.2 Composition of the Riksdag following the 1991 election, per seats



Source: Pierre and Widfeldt (1992).

The results of the general election were considered as historic by observers for many reasons. First, the election was disastrous for the ruling SAP government, which lost 5.7 per cent of votes and 18 seats compared to the 1988 general election. Nevertheless, the party remained the largest one in the Riksdag. Second, two political parties, KDS and the short-lived populist-right NyD, entered parliament for the first time, leading Wörlund (1992: 142) to rightly claim that “the durable Swedish five-party system is now definitely dead and gone”. Third, the 1991 election saw a fragmentation of the electorate, with all traditional parties (besides the Moderate Party) losing seats. As a result, a broad non-socialist right-wing government led by Moderate Party leader Carl Bildt succeeded to the Carlsson II government. This minority coalition¹¹⁷ included the three well-established centre-right parties as well as the newly elected Christian Democrats. While traditional ‘bourgeois coalitions’ were prone to internal conflicts in the 1970s and 1980s, there were some concerns about the stability of the Bildt government at the time of its creation (see for instance Sainsbury 1992; Wörlund 1992).

As far as European matters are concerned, the Bildt government’s programme was in the continuity of its predecessor. Amongst its main priorities presented before the Riksdag, the first one was to conduct successful negotiations for EU membership: “the government will do all it can to ensure that Sweden becomes a full member of the European Community as soon as possible” (Government of Sweden 1991).¹¹⁸ Even though negotiations over full EU membership constituted a top priority for the government, a vote over the new EEA agreement was to be held in the Riksdag. This agreement was of significant importance, as it covered about 75 per cent of the acquis communautaire, which was then to be discussed within the framework of Sweden’s application for full EU membership.

¹¹⁷ While the government accounted for 48.7 per cent of MPs, it could be relevant to talk of a quasi-majority coalition government. Indeed, the only non-socialist party that remained in the opposition was the newly elected New Democracy, which is strongly opposed to both SAP and Vp. As noted by Wörlund (1992: 143), “a strongly anti-socialist party like New Democracy is not likely to help the socialists overthrow a bourgeois government”.

¹¹⁸ Author’s translation: “Regeringen kommer med all kraft att verka för att Sverige snarast möjligt blir fullvärdig medlem av den europeiska gemenskapen”.

Table 4.5 Riksdag's vote on the European Economic Area agreement, per party¹¹⁹

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
M	80	75	0	5
SAP	138	127	2	9
C	31	27	1	3
Fp	33	32	0	1
Vp	15	0	9	6
KDS	26	23	0	3
Other	26	24	1	1
TOTAL	349	308	13	28

Source: Riksdag's archives.

Unsurprisingly, then, and as demonstrated in Table 4.5, a broad majority of MPs supported the EEA agreement on 18 November 1992. All pro-European parties voted in favour, leaving the anti-integrationist Left Party with 9 MPs against and with 6 abstentions. The populist-right NyD, who came up in favour of joining the European Union, also voted in favour of EEA membership. With a majority of pro-EEA parties in the Riksdag and all coalition parties supporting the agreement, the issue did not appear as a political challenge for the government. In sum, this result also reflects the parties' preferences on European integration. This vote thus paved the way for successful negotiations with the European Union, which formally started in February 1993. Following an intense year of consultations, an agreement between Stockholm and Brussels was finally reached on 1 March 1994 (Widfeldt and Pierre 1995).

As agreed under the Carlsson II government, a referendum was to be held on the issue of EU membership. On 18 March 1994, it was decided that the referendum would be held on 13 November 1994, following the general election scheduled for 18 September. The (somewhat controversial) decision to hold the referendum two months later was taken in order to disassociate the European issue from the general election.¹²⁰

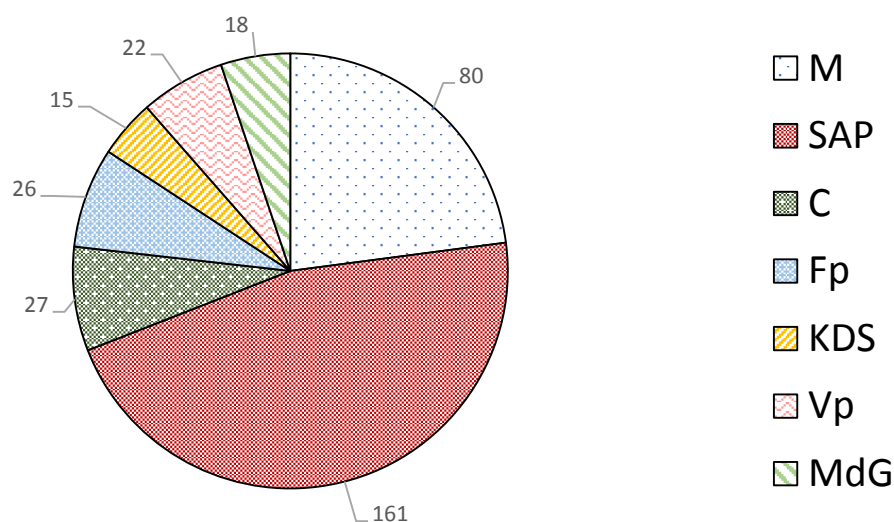
¹¹⁹ The number of MPs per party slightly differs from Figure 4.2 due to defectors and splinter groups. Independent MPs include one former Left Party MP (Annika Ahnberg) and two former New Democrats (Lars Andersson and Sten Söderberg), who left their respective parties following internal divergences.

¹²⁰ On the reasons explaining the controversial timing of the referendum, see Widfeldt (1996); Aylott (1997).

4.3.3. Carlsson III (7 October 1994 – 22 March 1996)

The 1994 general election campaign was dominated by domestic economic issues, and not by the forthcoming referendum on EU membership (Widfeldt 1996). Accordingly, it seems that all political parties agreed to avoid mixing both matters with the exception of the anti-EU Left Party and the Greens which, on the other hand, campaigned heavily on that theme from April 1994 onwards. Between 1991 and 1994, opinion polls suggested that SAP would recover from the disastrous preceding election: “[t]he election of 1991 had recorded the party’s worst result since 1928; that of 1994 was to prove the second best since 1970” (Widfeldt and Pierre 1995: 481).

Figure 4.3 Composition of the Riksdag following the 1994 election, per seats



Source: Widfeldt and Pierre (1995).

SAP received 45.2 per cent of votes (+7.5 per cent compared to 1991) and gained a total of 161 parliamentary seats (+23), while the Moderate Party remained stable (22.4 per cent, +0.5 per cent since 1991) with the 80 seats obtained four years earlier. However, the other non-socialist parties faced severe losses: while the Centre Party, the Liberal People’s Party and the Christian Democrats together lost a total of 22 seats, and New Democracy lost all representation in the Riksdag. In contrast, the Left Party gained 6 seats, and the Green Party made its comeback in parliament with 18 seats. All in all, it was a clear victory of the socialist bloc, and a single party minority government led by SAP leader Carlsson was installed on 7 October 1994 with parliamentary support from the Left Party. All the other

parties represented in parliament did mostly abstained from voting on the Prime Minister's appointment, apart from all 26 MPs from the Liberal People's Party who voted against. Nevertheless, the Carlsson III government subsequently co-operated with various parties throughout its mandate and particularly with the Centre Party from 1995 onwards (Pierre and Widfeldt 1996). This co-operation lasted until the 1998 general election (Pierre and Widfeldt 1998).

Interestingly enough, the Carlsson III government's ideology was more right-oriented than usual, with a value of 23.8 on Kim and Fording's index of government partisanship, while other social democratic minority governments were centre-to-left-oriented throughout the analysed period (see Table 4.3). This can be explained by the fact that SAP's manifesto mostly covered right-wing issues such as 'economic orthodoxy' or 'political authority' (see Table 2.3) in order to adapt to the specific domestic political context (i.e. the national economic situation). As a consequence, Carlsson III can be considered as an unusual example of social democratic right-wing government.

In his speech to the Riksdag introducing the government's general policy, Prime Minister Carlsson stated his support for Sweden's application for EU membership. He also offered two scenarios relating to the outcome of the referendum. On the one hand, in case of a victory for the No-side, "the EEA agreement will then be the basis for Sweden's relationship with the EU" (Government of Sweden 1994).¹²¹ On the other, should the electorate vote in favour of an EU membership, then the government would work for "an ever closer union amongst the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as closely as possible" (ibid.).¹²² Sweden's principle of neutrality was however emphasised in this declaration, and no mention of a potential participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union was made. This issue was thus temporarily off the political agenda.

Shortly after the general election, the referendum campaign started. As discussed throughout section 4.2, some parties suffered from strong internal divisions. This was particularly the case for the ruling Social Democratic Party, which adopted a strategy of compartmentalisation¹²³ in order to avoid potential ruptures which would hit the party's

¹²¹ Author's translation: "EES-avtalet kommer därvid att utgöra grunden för Sveriges relationer med EU".

¹²² Author's translation: "Det behövs en allt fastare sammanslutning mellan de europeiska folken, där besluten fattas så nära medborgarna som möjligt."

¹²³ This strategy of compartmentalisation and its consequences have been discussed in section 4.2.2.

unity in the long run. Accordingly, even though the government officially supported EU membership, two newly appointed ministers were openly opposed to this project (Aylott 1997). The Centre Party was also divided on the European issue, but the party leadership eventually secured a majority in favour of accession in the 1994 Congress (Widfeldt and Pierre 1995). Three parties were almost unanimously in favour of EU membership: the Moderate Party, the Liberal People's Party and (to a lesser extent) the Christian Democrats. Conversely, the Green and Left parties were strongly opposed to accession. The Yes-side eventually won the referendum with 52.3 per cent. On 15 December 1994, the Riksdag confirmed this decision with 296 votes in favour and 18 against (i.e. 17 Green and 1 Left MPs). Sweden subsequently became a formal member of the European Union on 1 January 1995, together with Austria and Finland.

4.3.4. Persson (22 March 1996 – 6 October 2006)

4.3.4.1. First mandate (1996-1998)

In December 1995, Ingvar Carlsson announced his intention to resign from both his positions as party leader and as prime minister. While the Social Democrats faced difficulties in finding his successor, the then minister of finance, Göran Persson, was eventually appointed prime minister on 22 March 1996. While this change implied a reshuffle within the cabinet, the government's type and ideology remained similar to its predecessor (Pierre and Widfeldt 1997).

The first European issue that the Persson government had to face was Sweden's participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union. Indeed, the government had to decide whether Sweden would join the Eurozone's first wave of entrants in 1999. This issue was controversial for both political and economic reasons. On the one hand, political parties were strongly divided and, as mentioned in section 4.2.2, the ruling SAP was even more divided than they were on the issue of EU membership in the early 1990s. Indeed, the party leadership had to face strong opposition to the EMU project amongst its MPs and ministers as well as from its rank-and-file members. On the other hand, there were doubts over the impact of such membership on the national economy and over the government's ability to control financial flows, as in other EU member states. However, the Swedish case rather diverges: "the complexity of

these assessments were exacerbated by a policy making style which drew heavily on extensive consultation with, and involvement of, organized interests throughout the policy process” (Pierre and Widfeldt 1997: 497). This draws on Ingebritsen’s (1998) sectoral approach, which has been discussed in section 2.1. Even though Sweden had to accept the EMU programme agreed by the member states in 1992 as part of the *acquis communautaire*, this issue constituted a ‘policy dilemma’ at the domestic level (Miles 2005b).

In October 1995, a group of economic experts were commissioned by the Carlsson III government in order to determine whether Sweden should join the EMU’s third stage in 1999, and thus be amongst the first wave of entrants in the Eurozone.¹²⁴ On 4 November 1996, the so-called Calmfors commission presented its conclusions and recommended that Sweden should not join (Pierre and Widfeldt 1997). While the commission report was purely advisory, it nevertheless played an important role in shaping the government’s position submitted on 10 October 1997, stating:

Sweden should not introduce the European Union’s single currency, the Euro, when the third stage of Economic and Monetary Union starts on January 1, 1999. Sweden should keep the door open for a later Swedish participation in the monetary union. The greatest possible freedom of action should be preserved. If the Government later finds that Sweden should participate, it will submit the question to the Swedish people for consideration (quoted in Miles 2005b: 230).

In other words, the government decided to support a *temporary* form of differentiated integration, leaving the final decision in the hands of the Swedish population. Besides the influence of the Calmfors report, this ‘wait and see’ decision has been explained by a variety of factors in the literature. First, the ruling Social Democratic Party was strongly divided on this issue. Consequently, the party’s National Board decided to follow the Calmfors commission’s recommendation, which then inspired the government’s official position on the issue. Second, because of these strong internal divisions, the government also decided to adopt a strategy of compartmentalisation, similarly to 1994. As such, “to avoid taking a painful decision, which, because of these internal divisions, might have jeopardized its objectives in the arenas of ‘normal’ politics, the party decided to delegate that decision to someone else – namely, the electorate” (Aylott 2005: 543). However, as discussed in section 4.1, the population seemed to be strongly opposed to the single

¹²⁴ For the full commission report, see Calmfors *et al.* (1997).

currency. In March 1997, Eurobarometer polls showed that only 28 per cent of the Swedish population was positive to EU membership, making Sweden the member state with the most negative public views on the European Union (Pierre and Widfeldt 1998). Furthermore, in November 1997, national opinion polls showed that less than 25 per cent of the Swedes were in favour of EMU participation, while 48 per cent were against (Aylott 2005; Lindahl and Naurin 2005). It thus seemed that a referendum could not be won at that time, justifying the 'wait and see' position the Persson cabinet adopted. Third, the government was significantly constrained by the domestic political situation in parliament. Indeed, as a single party minority cabinet, it had to rely on the support of some of the other parties in the Riksdag. Since 1995, the Centre Party was the government's main supporter and was strongly opposed to this policy (see section 4.2.3). As C was, at that time, underwriting a parliamentary majority for the Persson cabinet, adopting a position that was in favour of joining the EMU's third stage could potentially have compromised such a partnership. In other words, the government's decision to not be part of the Eurozone's first wave of entrants can also be explained by how it did not want to placate its main supporter in parliament (Aylott 2005; Miles 2005b). As a single-party minority government relying on such external parliamentary support, the Persson cabinet would have risked to harm its legitimacy by putting the EMU issue on top of its agenda, since the Centre Party was strongly opposed to this policy.

Furthermore, the composition of the Riksdag did not favour participation in the Eurozone in the late 1990s. According to opinion polls released in mid-1997, 40 per cent of the Social Democratic MPs were opposed to participation in the third stage of the EMU, while only 20 per cent were in favour (Pierre and Widfeldt 1998). Besides divisions within the ruling SAP, there was also the absence of a clear parliamentary majority which was in favour of participation. Indeed, only the Moderate and the Liberal People's parties were (mostly) in favour of such participation, accounting for 30.4 per cent of the composition of the Riksdag. Other parties that were (mostly) united against the EMU (i.e. the Centre Party, the Left Party, the Green Party and, at that time, the Christian Democrats) accounted for 23.5 per cent of MPs. Taking into account SAP's internal divisions, this meant that there was not a clear majority that were in favour of joining the monetary union. Therefore, and in contrast to the 1990 application for EU membership, the government decided to postpone a potential participation in the third stage of the EMU.

Table 4.6 Riksdag's vote on postponing participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union, per party

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
M	80	1	65	14
SAP	161	144	0	17
C	27	23	0	4
Fp	26	0	0	26
Vp	22	0	0	18
KDS	15	0	0	12
MdG	18	0	0	18
TOTAL	349	168	65	116

Source: Riksdag's archives.

Table 4.6 summarises the voting outcome on the government's proposal, which took place on 4 December 1997. Even though this proposal left the door open to a potential EMU membership in the future, the Centre Party nevertheless supported this position, as the decision to put this matter to a referendum was seen as acceptable by the party leadership. The largest opposition party, the (mostly pro-EMU) Moderate Party, voted against, while all other parties (including the pro-EMU Liberal People's Party) abstained. The decision to put such matter to a popular, non-binding referendum was made following the general election in 2002, when there were clear indications that such vote could be won. This will be further discussed in sub-section 4.3.4.3.

Another less controversial and also less politicised issue was raised during the 1997-1998 parliamentary session, that is, participation in the Schengen area. A Schengen membership was seen as a mean to preserve Nordic co-operation in the field, initiated by the implementation of the Nordic Passport Union in 1958. As a result, there was a broad party consensus over this issue, with the sole opposition being the two anti-AFSJ parties, the Left and Green parties.

Table 4.7 Riksdag's vote on participation in the Schengen area, per party

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
M	80	66	0	14
SAP	161	124	2	35
C	27	15	2	10
Fp	26	16	1	9
Vp	22	0	18	4
KDS	15	10	0	5
MdG	18	0	16	2
TOTAL	349	231	39	75

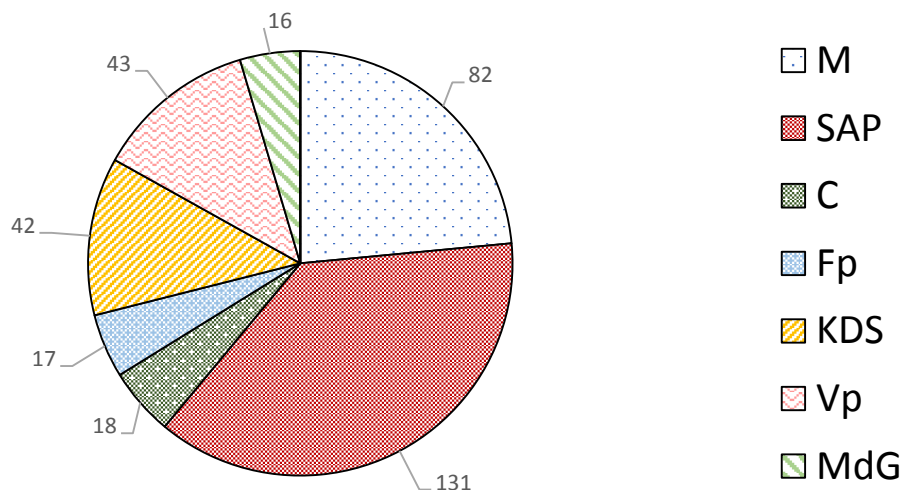
Source: Riksdag's archives.

This cross-party consensus is reflected in the parliamentary vote outlined in Table 4.7, which took place on 18 April 1998. Besides MdG and Vp, a comfortable majority of all other MPs voted in favour of the government's proposition to join Schengen.

4.3.4.2. Second mandate (1998-2002)

The 1998 general election was held on 20 September. The campaign was centred on fairly typical Swedish election topics, namely taxes, public expenditures and unemployment, while any European-related matters (including the future of Sweden's participation in the EMU) were mostly left off the agenda.

Figure 4.4 Composition of the Riksdag following the 1998 election, per seats



Source: Pierre and Widfeldt (1999).

The ruling Social Democratic Party lost 8.9 per cent and 30 parliamentary seats compared to the 1994 election. A significant amount of SAP votes were transferred to the Left Party, which received 12 per cent of votes (+5.8 per cent compared to 1994) and 43 seats (+21) and became the third largest party represented in the Riksdag. The Christian Democrats scored their best electoral result since its creation, with 11.8 per cent (+7.8 per cent) and 42 seats (+27). The Centre Party and the Liberal People's Party lost 9 seats each, while the Moderate and Green parties remained quite stable with respectively 82 (+2) and 16 (-2) seats (Möller 1999; Pierre and Widfeldt 1999).

Following the election, SAP Leader Persson announced his intention to form a single party minority government with the parliamentary support of the Left Party and, for the first time since its creation, the Green Party as well (Pierre and Widfeldt 1999). Support from the Greens constituted a political surprise for many observers, as the party had previously avoided positioning itself in either side of the two traditional blocks (Elander 2000). The Persson government, which was strongly reshuffled, took office on 6 October 1998. This time, its value on Kim and Fording's index of government partisanship (-3.5) suggests that it returned to a centrist ideology. Its stance on any further European co-operation remained mostly unchanged. In the presentation of the government programme to the Riksdag, Persson reiterated SAP's position on participation in the EMU's third stage adopted one year earlier:

The single currency will be implemented during this term. The decision on Swedish participation in the EMU third stage shall be submitted to the Swedish population by election or referendum. In order to increase awareness and stimulate a broad debate, a comprehensive informative and educational task will be launched (Government of Sweden 1998).¹²⁵

Interestingly enough, however, the aforementioned statement did not include any references that Sweden's participation in the Eurozone was to be raised during this parliamentary term. Even though, technically, the issue became salient once the EMU's third stage became effective in 1999 and subsequently led to intense discussions within several parties, the Riksdag and the government, the organisation of a referendum on Sweden's potential participation did not take place during this term. Three reasons have

¹²⁵ Author's translation: "Den gemensamma valutan kommer att förverkligas under denna mandatperiod. Beslut om svenskt deltagande i EMU:s tredje fas skall underställas det svenska folket i val eller i folkomröstning. För att öka kunskapen och stimulera en bred debatt påbörjas ett omfattande informations- och folkbildningsarbete om EMU".

been put forward to explain this. First, the fact that the government's partners in parliament were strongly opposed to such participation. Second, internal divisions within SAP remained topical, and the moment did not seem appropriate for the government to raise this issue. Third, Denmark had held a referendum on this issue on 28 September 2000, which saw the population rejecting participation in the EMU's third stage by a small majority (53.2 per cent), which thus gave a boost to the anti-EMU factions in Sweden (Downs 2001; Miles 2005b). However, from 1999 onwards, it appeared that the government had started to prepare the ground for a referendum. Indeed, "Persson began an elaborate political game during this period, aimed at bringing important political and interest group actors on side so that the holding of a referendum on the Euro could be viable politically after the September 2002 General Election" (Miles 2005b: 236). This 'political game' consisted of extensive consultations with interest groups, international actors (especially the United Kingdom) and party factions (Miles 2004). In 2000, then, the SAP congress voted in favour of participation in the third stage of the EMU, thus changing its previous 'wait and see' stance despite the strong internal divisions that prevailed. The Christian Democrats, which were strongly opposed to EMU until then, similarly changed their position and decided to support such participation (Widfeldt 2000b). Opinion polls had also started to show that the Swedish population was becoming more positive towards the EMU (Aylott 2005; Lindahl and Naurin 2005). The general election of 15 September 2002 was therefore to be crucial.

4.3.4.3. Third mandate (2002-2006)

Interestingly enough, and as in the 1994 general election, European issues (and particularly the EMU) did not constitute a central feature in the 2002 election campaign, as parties implicitly agreed that participation in the EMU's third stage should be separated from the general election where daily domestic politics prevailed (Miles 2005b). Instead, parties focused on 'unusual' issues such as immigration and integration,¹²⁶ as well as on more traditional issues such as education, health care and the economy (Widfeldt 2003a).

¹²⁶ On the salience of immigration and integration in the 2002 general election, see Ljunggren (2003); Widfeldt (2003b); Green-Pedersen and Odmalm (2008).

Figure 4.5 Composition of the Riksdag following the 2002 election, per seats



Source: Widfeldt (2003a).

When looking at the balance of power between the parties, some major changes had occurred. The Moderate Party, in particular, performed poorly and lost 27 seats, most of which that went to the Liberal People’s Party, which conversely gained a total of 48 seats (+31 compared to 1998). The Centre Party’s share of vote went up marginally and gained them a total of 22 seats (+4), whereas and the Christian Democrats was not as successful as they had been previously (33 seats, -9) Within the socialist bloc, SAP gained a total of 144 seats (+13), while the Left Party made a corresponding loss (30 seats, -13).

From a broader perspective, the outcome did not bring any major changes in the balance of power between the two blocs, the centre-left made a net gain of one seat whereas the centre-right lost one. As a consequence, Persson began consultations with both the Green and the Left parties in order to renew the existing parliamentary partnership and to be able to continue as a single party minority government.

While SAP, MdG and Vp preserved the required parliamentary majority, the Green Party put pressure on Persson by demanding seats in the cabinet in exchange for their support (Widfeldt 2003a). However, such a scenario was quickly ruled out by the SAP leader, who claimed that the new government’s policy was going to be to call a referendum on participating in the EMU’s third stage. As outlined by Miles (2005b: 240), “the Prime Minister argued that [the participation of the Green Party in the government] was not possible on the grounds that a credible government advocating Swedish EMU accession

in a future referendum could not also include Green ministers who opposed the country's membership of the Union".¹²⁷ In other words, a government composed of (mostly) pro- and anti-EMU parties would have been problematic. As a result, the Green Party started talks to form a minority centre-green government (consisting of a coalition between C, Fp, KDS and MdG), which would be tolerated by the Moderate Party (Widfeldt 2003a). These negotiations were however short-lived, as the Centre Party left the table a few days later. As a consequence, negotiations between the existing red-green partners were resumed, and the Persson government was eventually renewed, yet reshuffled, on 30 September, with the parliamentary support secured four years earlier. According to its value on Kim and Fording's index (-18.3), the government's ideology switched to a leftist one.

The government's policy towards European co-operation was quite positive, especially regarding the upcoming enlargement and the idea of introducing a common asylum policy. However, the government had also called for a reform of the Common Agricultural and Fisheries policies, and further suggested how the role of national parliaments should be strengthened within the EU's decision-making process. In terms of participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union, the government's programme stated that "talks will be initiated between the parties represented in the Riksdag concerning a date for a referendum on full Swedish participation in the EMU, the aim being to achieve as broad a consensus is possible" (Government of Sweden 2002: 12). This statement thus made it clear that organising a referendum on participation in the EMU's third stage was to be a top priority issue on the government's agenda. Hoping to reiterate the 1994 scenario which had proved to be in SAP's favour, the Persson government adopted a similar strategy, that is, to hold a referendum shortly after winning a general election; not to sanction any anti-EMU members; and to appoint key anti-EMU figures within its leadership (as well as within the government). Furthermore, following changes to several parties' positions on EMU membership in 2000, the new parliamentary situation seemed to evolve in favour of an EMU membership. Indeed, as SAP and KDS had changed their stances on the issue, four

¹²⁷ In accordance with SAP's strategy of compartmentalisation, however, this rationale did not extend to party members: accordingly, anti-EMU ministers were included in the third mandate of the Persson cabinet (Miles 2005b).

out of the seven parties represented in the Riksdag were now officially in favour of this policy.

In sum, the composition of parliament and the composition of government came to play an important role in shaping Persson's decision to hold a referendum. Furthermore, due to SAP's strategy of compartmentalisation which partly consisted in dissociating the EMU issue from the more day-to-day politics, the fact that the government was in minority did not threaten its existence, despite both of its parliamentary partners (MdG and Vp) being opposed to such policy. On 29 November, all parliamentary party leaders agreed that a referendum would be held on 14 September 2003. This decision was voted in the Riksdag on 12 March 2003.

Table 4.8 Riksdag's vote on holding a referendum on the introduction of the Euro, per party

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
M	55	48	0	7
SAP	144	132	0	12
C	22	18	0	4
Fp	48	43	0	5
Vp	30	0	25	5
KDS	33	29	0	4
MdG	17	0	15	2
TOTAL	349	270	40	39

Source: Riksdag's archives.

As Table 4.8 shows, there was a broad consensus on organizing a referendum. This did not constitute a surprise, as the government had already reached a compromise on this matter with other parties. Although the Centre Party remained opposed to this policy, it still voted in favour of the government's proposal, as its leadership believed that the issue should be in the hands of the electorate. Only the two anti-EMU parties voted against, and mostly expressed concerns on the formulation of the question (Widfeldt 2004). In compliance with the general strategy of compartementatisation, Persson declared that the formal parliamentary co-operation with both anti-EMU parties would continue independently from the referendum campaign (Aylott 2005).

Before the referendum campaign had officially started, all political parties held congresses with the intention of coming up with an official position.¹²⁸ While a small majority of the parties were mostly united in favour of this issue (with the Centre, the Green and the Left parties being mostly against),¹²⁹ the Social Democratic Party remained divided and had members campaigning on both fronts, despite the official party line being in favour of an EMU membership (Aylott 2005). While a majority of the MPs, together with a majority of the ministers,¹³⁰ were hoping for a victory of the ‘Yes’-camp, a gap of 13.9 per cent between both sides showed that this decision had been a miscalculation from the Social Democratic leadership (see Aylott 2005; Aylott *et al.* 2013).

4.3.5. Reinfeldt (6 October 2006 -)

4.3.5.1. First mandate (2006-2010)

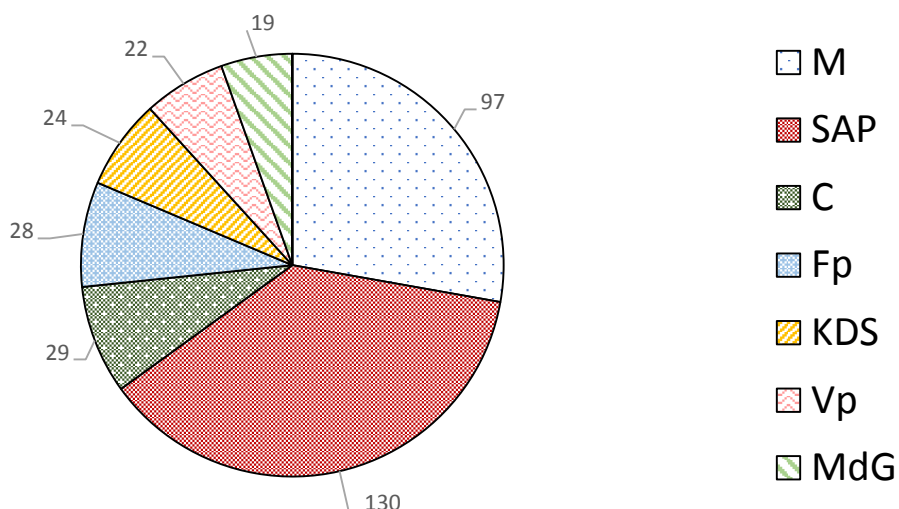
The 2006 election marked the end of a decade ruled by the Social Democratic Party in single party minority governments and, in a broader sense, hinted at the end of the Social Democratic hegemony in Sweden. The election campaign was unique. For the first time in Sweden’s political history, the four centre-right parties formally campaigned together under “the Alliance” and presented a joint manifesto based on eight key areas: growth, education, foreign policy, the welfare state, the labour market, justice, taxation and social security (Aylott and Bolin 2007). On the other side of the political spectrum, and even though the informal red-green parliamentary majority did not campaign on a common platform, it seemed clear that SAP, MP and Vp would continue to co-operate. Their campaign was also tarnished by several political affairs which mostly hit the ruling administration (see Widfeldt 2007). It is also believed that the outcome of the EMU referendum negatively affected the government’s popularity.

¹²⁸ For a full analysis of the referendum campaign and its outcome, see Widfeldt (2004); Aylott (2005); Lindahl and Naurin (2005); Miles (2005b).

¹²⁹ It should be noted that small grass-root factions of the Green and Left parties campaigned in favour of the Euro. These groups were respectively named ‘Green Euro’ and ‘Left for EMU’; see Aylott (2005).

¹³⁰ Lindahl and Naurin (2005) as well as Aylott and Bolin (2007) noted that a significant amount of ministers and politically appointed members of the administration actively campaigned for the ‘No’-side.

Figure 4.6 Composition of the Riksdag following the 2006 election, per seats



Source: Widfeldt (2007).

As a consequence, SAP suffered its worst election results since 1920 (35 per cent of the votes, -4.9 per cent compared to 2002; and 130 seats, -14). The Left Party (-8 seats), the Christian Democrats (-9) and the Liberal People's Party (-20) also suffered major losses. The unquestionable winner was the Moderate Party, achieving its highest electoral result since 1928 (26.2 per cent, +10.9 per cent; and 97 seats, +42). The Centre Party also made substantial gains, while the Green Party was the only 'left bloc' party to not suffer any dramatic loss in support. With these results, the Alliance accounted for 178 seats, while the red-greens totalled 171 seats. As a consequence, Persson resigned as prime minister as well as party leader, and a majority non-socialist centrist government was created by Moderate Party leader Reinfeldt, who became the youngest Prime Minister in Sweden's history.

On 6 October 2006, Reinfeldt presented the new government's policy. In terms of European policy, the programme stated that "Sweden is clearly at the heart of European co-operation. The Government wishes to work for an open, effective and dynamic European Union" (Government of Sweden 2006).¹³¹ This is hardly surprising, as the majority of in the 'Alliance' were mostly pro-integrationists (with the Centre Party being slightly more reluctant). Furthermore, the statement was mentioned in the Alliance's

¹³¹ Author's translation: "Sverige ska vara en aktiv och pådrivande kraft i Europeiska unionen".

common electoral platform (Allians för Sverige 2006). While the agreement avoided raising the issue of EMU membership which, since the 2003 referendum, mostly became non-salient, the new government was clearly more pro-EU than its predecessor had been, with a total of 16 pro-European policies mentioned compared to 5 in Persson's third mandate's government programme. More importantly, the Reinfeldt government was committed to participate in the CFSP, as the below quote suggests:

The development and design of our security policy must continue to be made in broad national consensus. Sweden is military non-aligned. Our country's future security is based on community and co-operation with other countries. The government attaches importance to the EU's common security strategy. Demands from the UN, the EU and NATO for Sweden's participation in international operations have never been greater. Sweden should have increased opportunities to participate in international peace operations (Government of Sweden 2006).¹³²

On 19 December 2007, the Riksdag voted in favour of a Swedish participation in the Nordic Battle Group for the first semester of 2008. As mentioned in section 2.2, this vote was followed by further discussions that had been initiated in 2004 between Sweden, Estonia, Finland, Norway and Ireland. Within this Battle Group, it was decided that Sweden would be the Framework Nation, meaning that it had a special responsibility in coordinating the battle group's actions and, if necessary, the implementation of a military crisis management (Government of Sweden 2007).

Participation in such an EU policy was hardly seen as controversial even within the context of the well-grounded policy of non-alignment. Indeed, "Sweden has gradually redefined its traditional policy of neutrality, and though it remains (military) alliance-free, it sees an important difference between NATO and the EU when it comes to the nature, functions and ends of security. In this context, the [EUBG concept] makes a particularly good fit with the current trajectory of Swedish defense reforms" (Jacoby and Jones 2008: 316). In other words, participation in the NBG was seen by the government as beneficial with regards to its foreign policy.

¹³² Author's translation: "Utvecklingen och utformningen av vår säkerhetspolitik måste fortsatt ske i brett nationellt samförstånd. Sverige är militärt alliansfritt. Vårt lands framtida säkerhet bygger på gemenskap och samverkan med andra länder. Regeringen fäster vikt vid EU:s gemensamma säkerhetsstrategi. Efterfrågan från FN, EU och Nato på Sveriges medverkan i internationella insatser har aldrig varit större. Sverige bör ha ökade möjligheter att delta i olika internationella fredsinsatser. "

Following government negotiations with other participating countries, the Swedish parliamentary committee on foreign affairs and defence prepared a report (2007/08: UFöU3) on participation in the NBG, which was backed by six out of the seven parties. The anti-CFSP Left Party unsurprisingly rejected this policy, whereas the Green Party supported such participation, despite expressing some material concerns during the parliamentary session. The Greens' position, which historically opposed any institutionalised co-operation within the EU framework, has been explained by an interviewee as such:

I think we had an agreement with other parties that we should be part of the Nordic Battle Group at that time. [...] Since the European Battle Groups are on standby and can be used only for operations that have been agreed upon, we do not think it is a problem to agree on this and we are prepared to participate and to use it. It was a very pragmatic vote.¹³³

Furthermore, as mentioned in section 4.2.6.2, the party had progressively moved away from an explicit anti-EU stance, a position which was not only less profitable in terms of gaining votes but also a strategy that had prevented the possibility of entering into any form of government coalition. Table 4.9 outlines the parliamentary vote on participation in the NBG which took place on 19 December 2007 and which received an overwhelming majority – 292 votes in favour, and 20 against.

Table 4.9 Riksdag's vote on participation in the Nordic Battle Group during the first semester of 2008, per party

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
M	97	90	0	7
SAP	130	115	1	14
C	29	26	0	3
Fp	28	22	0	6
Vp	22	0	19	3
KDS	24	22	0	2
MdG	19	17	0	2
TOTAL	349	292	20	37

Source: Riksdag's archives.

It seems clear that the government's positive attitude towards participation in the NBG was facilitated by the composition of parliament (as most parties were largely in favour of this policy) and the composition of the government (as all centre-right parties were in

¹³³ Interview with a MP from the Green Party, 25 March 2014.

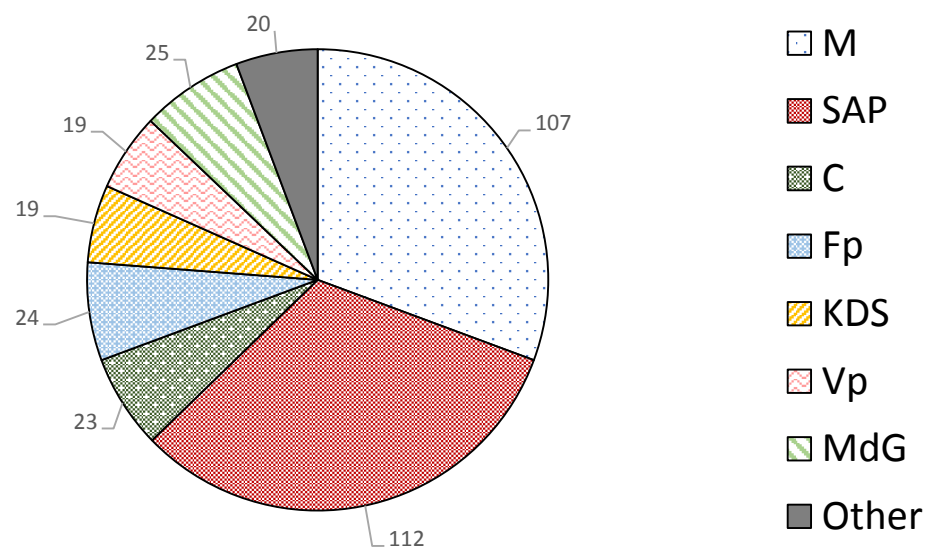
favour of full participation in the CFSP). As a majority government, the Reinfeldt cabinet did furthermore not have to count on support from the opposition and, as such a decision also had an impact on Nordic co-operation, it could have been expected that the cabinet would have adopted a similar position if it was in minority.

In terms of European policies, the rest of Reinfeldt's first mandate as Prime Minister was mostly marked by Sweden's presidency of the EU, from July to December 2009 (see Miles 2010; Widfeldt 2010).

4.3.5.2. Second mandate (2010-2014)

The general election that took place on 19 September 2010 was somewhat historic, at least in the Swedish context. In an attempt to compete against the ruling Alliance, the three opposition parties decided to form their 'own' alliance and campaigned together as the 'Red-Greens' (*De Rödgröna*).

Figure 4.7 Composition of the Riksdag following the 2010 election, per seats



Source: Widfeldt (2011).

Following a campaign that was marked by the absence of EU issues and one that instead focused on the future of the Swedish welfare state, the Social Democratic Party received 30.7 per cent of votes (-4.3 per cent compared with 2006), and 112 parliamentary seats (-18), enduring an all-time low record for the party. The Left Party (-3 seats), the Centre

Party (-6), the Liberal People's Party (-4) and the Christian Democrats (-5) also suffered losses, while the Green Party (+6), and more importantly the Moderate Party (+10) achieved their best election results ever. Above all, the biggest post-electoral change following the 2010 general election was the fact that a populist radical right party, the Sweden Democrats, entered parliament for the first time with 20 seats. Despite the Moderate Party's result, the ruling government lost its parliamentary majority, getting a total of 173 seats (-5). In the opposition, the Red-Greens were granted a total of 156 seats (-15; Widfeldt 2011).

Following the election and negotiations between parties belonging to the Alliance, the Reinfeldt government was renewed for a second term. Due to its high electoral result, the Moderate Party extended its influence within the coalition, gaining two additional ministerial positions that were created in consultation with the 'Alliance' parties. While its ideology remained centrist (+1.2 on Kim and Fording's index of government partisanship), the main difference in 2010 was that the government had just lost its parliamentary majority. As the cabinet now only required two additional MPs from the other parties to secure a majority and knowing that a coalition between the red-green parties and the Swedish Democrats would be ideologically improbable (Widfeldt 2011), it could be more relevant to talk of it as a 'quasi-majority coalition' rather than as a 'minority coalition'. The government's programme presented to the Riksdag on 5 October did not bring major changes, especially in terms of European co-operation. It emphasized Sweden's participation in various peacekeeping operations, both within the framework of the EU and beyond. More importantly for the framework of this thesis, the government reiterated its commitment to the Nordic Battle Group:

Through our participation in the Nordic Battle Group, one of two EU rapid reaction forces, Sweden is taking responsibility for peace and security within and outside our region. Sweden will command the Nordic Battle Group in 2011. We should also have the ambition of undertaking its command in 2014 (Government of Sweden 2010).

Unsurprisingly, then, the Riksdag voted in favour of a second participation in the NBG on 14 December 2010 (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 Riksdag's vote on participation in the Nordic Battle Group during the first semester of 2011, per party

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
M	107	103	0	4
SAP	112	105	0	7
C	23	22	0	1
Fp	24	22	0	2
Vp	19	0	17	2
KDS	19	17	0	2
MdG	25	24	0	1
Other	20	0	0	20
TOTAL	349	293	17	39

Source: Riksdag's archives.

In comparison with the first vote (outlined in Table 4.9), the voting pattern remained largely intact: six parties were in favour (i.e. M, Fp, C, KDS, SAP and MdG), and one was against (Vp). MPs from the Sweden Democrats, however, decided to abstain.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter has analysed how the relationship between Sweden and the European Union has evolved in the past decades. It has been demonstrated that this relationship has been affected by what is referred to as 'federio-scepticism' (i.e. opposition to a federalist vision of Europe) at all levels. The position of each well-established party towards European co-operation has been analysed, as well as the evolution of government positions on the selected policy areas from 1990 onwards. As stated in the introduction, Sweden belongs to the 'outer core' of the Union, enjoying a *de facto* opt-out of participation in the third stage of the EMU. Accordingly, and in order to understand the various government positions on this form of differentiation and what the implications have been, the emphasis has mostly been placed on this policy area, but without undervaluing the other policies analysed within the framework of this comparative study. As a case study exemplifying horizontal differentiated integration (and, more especially, internal differentiation), several conclusions can be drawn from the Swedish experience with regard to the hypotheses explored in this study.

First, the composition of parliament played a significant role in shaping the government positions on European integration. This is best exemplified by Persson's decision not to

join the third stage of the EMU in 1997. Indeed, while other factors (i.e. divisions within the ruling party, public opinion and the influence of the Calmfors report) should not be ignored, the absence of a clear parliamentary majority in favour of this policy prevented the Social Democratic government from adopting its strategy of compartmentalisation, which was successfully used in the context of EU membership in 1994. By 2003 however, and following the switches in SAP and KDS positions, the new composition of the Riksdag was seen as favourable to such policy and led the government to call for a referendum. In all other policy cases that have been analysed herein, it also appears that the composition of the Riksdag provided a favourable environment for supporting government positions on European issues. The Swedish case would thus confirm the first hypothesis, according to which *if there is a majority of pro-European integration parties in parliament, then the government will be in favour of deepening the country's relationship with the European Union.*

Second, with regard to the composition of government, the Swedish case shows that all cabinets included parties that shared similar positions on European co-operation. On the one hand, as demonstrated in section 4.2, all centre-right parties belonging to the 'Alliance' (from 2006 onwards) shared the same platform regarding foreign policy. On the other, it appears that the Greens and the Left Party's critical positions on Europe by and large prevented them from joining the Social Democratic Party in a centre-left (or red-green) cabinet. The ruling SAP preferred to form single party minority governments and rely on parliamentary support from these parties (especially from 1998 onwards), as discussed in sections 4.3.4.2 and 4.3.4.3. This would confirm the second hypothesis, suggesting that *if there is a majority of pro-European integration parties in the government, then the government will be in favour of deepening the country's relationship with the European Union.*

Third, throughout the period analysed, the Swedish cabinets consisted of three different types of governments: single party minority, majority and finally minority ones (even though it could be argued that the Bildt and second Reinfeldt governments were quasi-majority coalitions). However, the Swedish case does not appear to support the third hypothesis explored in this study, according to which *a minority government will avoid putting the issue of European integration on top of its agenda.* The issues of EEA and Schengen memberships as well as participating in the EMU's third stage were all raised under a social democratic single party minority government, and could as such not necessarily

count on a broad parliamentary support for these policies. The same goes for both the minority and majority non-socialist governments. There was a significant cross-party consensus over the issues raised under their leadership (i.e. EU membership and participation in the NBG). As a result, hypotheses related to the type of government seem to be dismissed by the Swedish example.

Fourth, according to Kim and Fording's index, it appears that government ideology varied much more than in Finland between 1991 and 2010. While Carlsson III/Persson (first mandate) and Bildt were right-oriented, the Carlsson II and Persson (third mandate) governments were leftists. In contrast, Persson (second mandate) and both Reinfeldt cabinets were considered as centrists. In 1998, the right-wing Persson government decided not to join the third stage of the EMU, which would confirm hypothesis 5 according to which *government's support for European integration will decline as it moves further to either the left or the right*. Such finding should nonetheless be tempered by a series of domestic political constraints which have been discussed in section 4.3.4.1 (including strong internal divisions on this issue within SAP). Conversely, other non-centrist governments supported developments at the European level. This is best exemplified by Persson's support for participation in the Eurozone in 2002. As a result, the Swedish case does not seem to confirm hypothesis 5, and Persson's position on participation in the EMU in 1997 should be considered as an exception.

The following chapter will focus on Norway, which is located at the 'inner periphery' of the European Union.

Chapter 5. Norway

5.1. Relations between Norway and the European Union: between Euroscepticism and Europhilia

Box 5.1 Timeline: Norway's major steps towards integration

Date	Agreement
1949	Membership, Council of Europe
1949	Membership, NATO
1960	Membership, European Free Trade Association
1962	Application for European Economic Community membership, withdrawn following France's veto on the United Kingdom application
1967	Application for European Economic Community membership, suspended following France's second veto (reactivated in 1969 following De Gaulle's resignation)
1972	Application for European Economic Community membership rejected by the population
1973	Free trade agreement with the European Economic Community
1992	Application for European Union Membership
1992	Associate membership, Western European Union [WEU]
1994	Membership, European Economic Area European Union Membership rejected by the population
1996	Membership, Schengen Area (implemented in 2001, jointly with the other Nordic states)
2000	Agreement on participation in the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
2001	Agreement on co-operation in the European Police Office [EUROPOL]
2001	Agreement on participation in the European Union Satellite Centre
2003	Ratification of the Dublin Regulation (on asylum applications)
2003	Agreement on mutual assistance in criminal matters
2005	Agreement on co-operation in the EU's Judicial Co-operation Unit [EUROJUST]
2006	Associate membership, European Police College
2006	Agreement on the recognition of the European Arrest Warrant
2007	Ratification of the Lugano Convention on mutual recognition of courts and judgements in civil and commercial matters
2008	Participation in the Nordic Battle Group (ready for operations between January and June)
2011	Participation in the Nordic Battle Group (ready for operations between January and June)

Source: based on Norges offentlige utredinger (2012). For the full list of agreements between Norway and the European Union, see European Union External Action Service (2010).

As demonstrated in Box 5.1, the relationship between Norway and the European Union is more complex than in the cases of Finland and Sweden. On the one hand, the European issue was activated three decades earlier, and Norway applied for EC/EU membership on three occasions. On the other hand, the population rejected such membership twice: in 1972 (with 53.5 per cent against and a turnout of 79 per cent) and in 1994 (52.2 per cent, turnout of 89 per cent). Since the outcome of the last referendum, co-operation between Oslo and Brussels mostly takes place through the European Economic Area agreement, which covers about 75 percent of the European legislation and grants Norway access to the European Single Market. The EEA thus constitutes a ‘meta-agreement’ which enables Norway to belong to the ‘inner periphery’ of the European Union. Egeberg and Trondal (1999: 134) even argue that “the non-member EEA countries are integrated to the same extent as full members are as far as policy harmonization is concerned”. However, Norway further co-operates with the European Union in many areas that are not covered by the EEA agreement.

Figure 5.1 Map of the agreements between Norway and the European Union, as of 2013

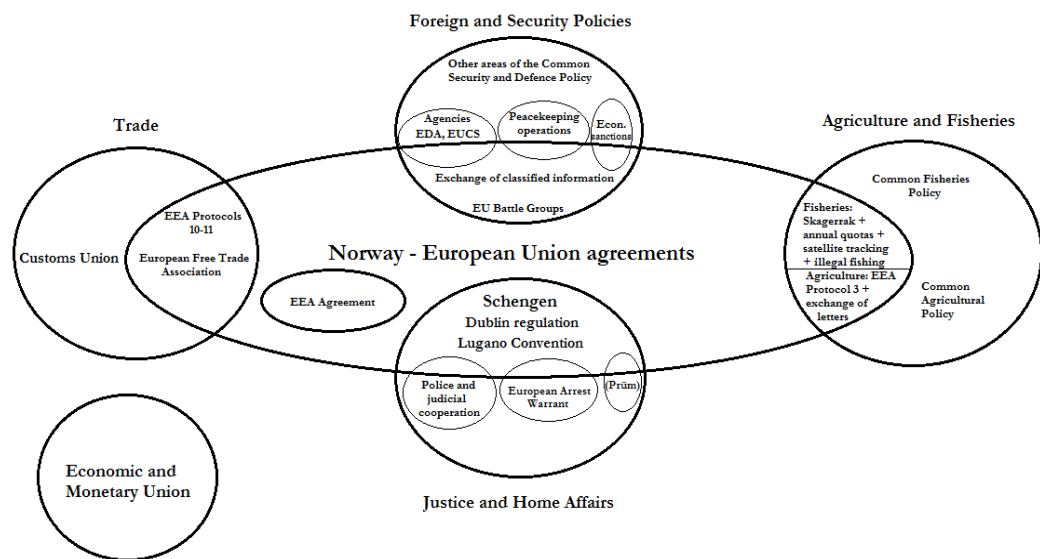


Figure 5.1 attempts to demonstrate the complexity of the relationship Norway has with the EU outside the EEA, by mapping agreements per main policy areas. While the EMU does not fall within the scope of any agreements due to Norway’s status as non-member of the EU, the Norwegian authorities decided to take part to other policies not covered within the scope of the EEA. As summarised by Sitter (2012: 276) “Norway has [...]

secured access to a number of other EU-related activities, from ad hoc participation in education policy, military and police initiatives to almost full membership of Schengen, in a system sometimes described as ‘buy-ins’ because it mirrors EU states’ opt-outs but comes with a price tag’.

What contextual factors contribute to explain this particularly complex relationship between Norway and the European Union, contrasting with the Finnish and Swedish cases? The aim of this section is to highlight these factors and to offer a brief historic overview of the evolution of such relationship.

Unlike Finland and Sweden, Norway was an occupied territory during the Second World War following the German invasion of 9 April 1940. Norway subsequently ratified the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949 and effectively became a founding member of NATO. As explained by Gstöhl (2002: 51), “[t]he bad experience with neutrality in World War II and the Cold War climate made Norway turn to the Atlantic alliance in spite of its historical aversion to integration”. NATO membership was perceived as beneficial by the majority of Norwegian political elites, despite having a common border with the USSR. According to Tunsjø (2011: 73), “Norway aligned with NATO to deter the Soviet Union, while simultaneously screening its role in the alliance through self-imposed restrictions and engaging with the Soviet Union diplomatically, thereby aiming to reassure Moscow”. By joining NATO, the country strengthened its security ties with the United States and, more importantly, with the United Kingdom, which has been Norway’s main trading partner since its independence in 1905 (*ibid.*). In short, the country did not follow the same path as its Eastern Nordic neighbours in terms of foreign and security policy, mostly due to its experience of the Second World War. As a consequence, the European issue became politically salient much earlier than in Finland and Sweden, where the principles of neutrality and military non-alignment prevailed.

Throughout the 1950s and until the early 1970s, Norway’s position on European integration was mostly influenced by the United Kingdom’s preferences. The Stockholm Convention establishing EFTA was signed in 1960 by seven countries, including Norway.¹³⁴ As early as 1961, shortly after the ratification of the Stockholm Convention, the UK, with Denmark and Ireland, contemplated the idea of joining the European

¹³⁴ The seven founding countries were: the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland and Portugal.

Community and eventually applied for membership. As a response to this application and despite strong internal divisions within the Norwegian Parliament (the Storting) and also within political parties, Norway decided to submit a first application for EC membership on 30 April 1962. However, following French President Charles de Gaulle's veto on UK's entry into the Community, Norway's application was withdrawn. A similar situation occurred in 1967, but the membership issue was reactivated following de Gaulle's resignation in 1969 (Archer 2005). Negotiations between the EC and Norway took place between 1970 and early 1972. The accession treaty was then submitted for approval by the electorate on 25 September 1972. Following the negative outcome of this referendum and while the UK, Ireland and Denmark joined the European Community, this issue lost its political saliency at the domestic level until the early 1990s.

Whereas the then ongoing negotiations on the future EEA agreement were welcomed by the Norwegian authorities, Sweden and Finland's decisions to apply for an EU membership modified the political context surrounding the EEA. Indeed, with these applications, Norway was facing the risk of being isolated from the rest of the European continent as only three countries would remain part of the EEA: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. As a consequence of both Finland and Sweden's decisions and even though the Norwegian government, led by Labour Party Leader Gro Harlem Brundtland, tried to avoid such an issue, it had no choice but to put the application on the agenda during its national convention in April 1992 (Kux and Sverdrup 2000; see further section 5.3.2). In fact, "[i]t seems that the Labour leadership had originally hoped that the EEA would be brought in from 1 January 1993 and, after a few years of 'socialization' in the single market the public would come more easily to accept full membership of [...] the EU" (Archer 2005: 57). Norway eventually reapplied for an EU membership on 25 November 1992. Negotiations started in May 1993 and were concluded in March 1994 (Sæter 1996). On 27 and 28 November 1994, 52.2 per cent of the electorate then rejected such membership via referendum (with a turnout of 88.6 per cent). The outcome of both referendums (in 1972 and 1994) has been explained by the fact that the centre-periphery cleavage prevails in Norway (see e.g. Bjørklund 1996).

Despite the electorate's second rejection of EU membership and besides participation in the EEA, the Norwegian authorities enhanced co-operation with the European Union through the ratification of 97 agreements in various policy areas between 1995 and 2011

while remaining in the ‘inner periphery’ of the Union (European External Relations Service 2010; see also Box 5.1 and Figure 5.1). This ‘ever closer co-operation’ is mostly explained by the fact that there is a strong political willingness to strengthen ties with Brussels. In other words, “Norway’s approach to European integration is the product of the somewhat paradoxical combination of marginal popular majorities against EU membership in 1972 and 1994 and a seemingly permanent pro-integration parliamentary majority” (Eliassen and Sitter 2003: 127).

In sum, according to the existing literature, two major contextual factors contribute in explaining this complex relationship between Norway and the European Union. First, Norway’s experience of the Second World War influenced national authorities to join NATO as early as 1949, and thus did not consider military non-alignment as a viable option. As such, Norway is more internationally oriented than Finland and Sweden, and the European issue became politically salient much earlier than in the two aforementioned states. Second, there is a strong degree of mass-level Euroscepticism in Norway, which contrasts with more pro-integrationist elite preferences. As a consequence, while membership was rejected via referendum, national authorities try to enhance co-operation between Oslo and Brussels.

The following section will now study the Norwegian party system and the well-established parties’ positions on European integration.

5.2. The Norwegian Party System and European Integration

The Kingdom of Norway is a parliamentary representative constitutional monarchy, like its Swedish neighbour. The Storting (or *Stortinget*) is the national unicameral parliament, where 169 representatives are elected for a term of four years (Matthews and Valen 1999). As mentioned by Heidar (2001: 62), “[s]ince the introduction of parliamentarism in 1884, parties have been the main actors in Norwegian politics”. Like for Finland and Sweden, it is thus relevant to provide an in-depth analysis of the Norwegian party system, and the parties’ positions regarding European integration, before focusing on the executive actor.

In Norway, the analysis focuses on the period between 1990, when negotiations on the EEA agreement led to strong divisions within the government, and ends in 2010 with the

decision to participate in the Nordic Battle Group during the first semester of 2011. Throughout this period, seven parties have been able to secure regular seats in the Storting: the Conservative Party (*Høyre*, H); the Labour Party (*Arbeiderpartiet*, A), belonging to the social democratic party family; the agrarian Centre Party (*Senterpartiet*, Sp); the Liberal Party (*Venstre*, V); the Christian Democratic Party (*Kristelig Folkeparti*, KrF, formerly named Christian People's Party); the Socialist Left Party (*Sosialistisk Venstreparti*, SV); and the populist right Progress Party (*Fremskrittspartiet*, FrP).¹³⁵ Much like in Sweden, the Norwegian party system has been traditionally divided into two main ideological blocs:

[F]or a number of elections, dating back to 1965, the Norwegian electorate has been confronted with two clear-cut government alternatives, a single Labour Party government based on a socialist majority or a coalition consisting of bourgeois parties (the Centre Party, the Christian People's Party, the Conservatives and in earlier period the Liberals). These alternatives, which fit the division on the left-right axis, have remained the same (Narud 1995: 5).

However, from the 1990s onwards, this bloc division became somewhat less clear. Indeed, since the collapse of the Syse government over the EEA issue (see further section 5.3.1), the traditional bourgeois bloc has not been renewed. Moreover, in recent years, the agrarian Centre Party joined the Labour and Socialist Left parties to form a coalition government (see further section 5.3.7), thus breaking with the tradition of 'bloc politics'. Nevertheless, there are still signs of such political blocs, illustrated by the division between the Labour and Conservative parties (Narud and Strøm 2011).

Table 5.1 summarises the evolution of the electoral score of each party between 1989 and 2009. Until the 2013 general election (which is not analysed in this study), the Progress Party was the only party that had never been appointed at the executive level.

¹³⁵ The Progress Party is usually shortened as 'Fp'; however, as such acronym has already been used for the Liberal People's Party of Sweden and in order to avoid confusion, the initials 'FrP' are used in this analysis.

Table 5.1 Percentage vote for Norwegian political parties in parliamentary elections, from 1989 to 2009

	1989	1993	1997	2001	2005	2009
Conservative Party (H)	22.0	17.0	14.3	21.2	14.1	17.2
Labour Party (A)	34.3	36.9	35	24.3	32.7	35.4
Centre Party (Sp)	6.5	16.7	7.9	5.6	6.5	6.2
Liberal Party (V)	3.2	3.6	4.5	3.9	5.9	3.9
Christian Democratic Party (KrF)	8.5	7.9	13.7	12.4	6.8	5.5
Socialist Left Party (SV)	1.1	7.9	6.0	12.5	8.8	6.2
Progress Party (FrP)	13	6.3	15.3	14.6	22.1	22.9
Other	2.1	3.6	3.4	5.5	2.9	2.5
Turnout	83.2	75.8	78.3	75.5	77.4	76.4

Source: Aardal (1990); Heidar (1994); Narud (1998); Aalberg (2002; 2010); Aalberg and Brekken (2006).

This section analyses the evolution of the party system in Norway, and how parties positioned themselves regarding European co-operation since the early 1990s. Similarly to the two previous empirical chapters, it is divided into one sub-section per well-established party family. The final sub-section will then offer a summary of party positions on European integration.

5.2.1. Conservative Party

Founded in 1884, the Conservative Party (or Høyre) is a centre-right party belonging to the same party family as the Finnish National Coalition Party and the Swedish Moderate Party. At the domestic level, the party is historically close to the Liberal Party,¹³⁶ and has co-operated with other bourgeois parties (i.e. the Christian Democratic Party and, until 1990, the Centre Party). However, since 2005, the party has started to co-operate with the Progress Party.¹³⁷ Between the 1989 and 2009 general elections, the party's election results fluctuated between 14.1 per cent (in 2005) and 22.2 per cent (in 1989), being either the second or the third largest party represented in the Storting.

¹³⁶ Originally, this white-collar party was created "to uphold the rule of law and to fight the political populist democracy of the Liberal Party" (Heidar 2001: 66).

¹³⁷ On 16 October 2013, the Solberg government was appointed and consists of a minority coalition between the Conservative Party and the Progress Party.

Throughout the years, the Conservative Party has been the most pro-EU party in Norway, campaigning in favour of membership as early as 1972 (together with the Labour Party). Since 1989, its position on the European Union has remained stable, and the party still advocates full membership as well as participation in all European policy areas. The 1997 party manifesto constitutes the only notable exception. Following the outcome of the 1994 referendum, the Conservative Party decided to emphasise the need to maintain and deepen the EEA agreement. As mentioned in this manifesto:

The decision to say no to EU membership was not a decision to refuse to co-operate with the EU. Developments in the EU are increasingly important for Norway. Norwegian interests are best secured through the broadest possible co-operation with the EU and its member states. The EU currently accounts for about 80 per cent of our exports. The EEA is, therefore, absolutely essential as most of our companies have the same regulations as their competitors (Høyre 1997).¹³⁸

Despite reluctance from a minority of party members,¹³⁹ there is a broad consensus within the Conservatives on the issue of European integration. The Storting vote on the application for EU membership that took place in 1992 illustrates this: all thirty-seven Conservative MPs voted in favour of the application (Archer 2005; see section 5.3.2). Furthermore, the party sees the EEA agreement “not as a good alternative, but a good tool, as a necessary step for us towards membership”.¹⁴⁰ Despite this strong and stable position on European integration as well as on EU membership, Heidar (2001: 67) argued that this issue “gave the Conservatives few opportunities to present a distinct political profile to the electorate. If the party wanted Norway to join [...] it had to play second fiddle to the Labor Party”. This view might be contested, as the Labour Party was strongly divided on the membership issue in the early 1990s (as discussed below). In sum, the Conservative Party can be considered as Norway’s most pro-integrationist party and would like Norway to belong to the ‘inner core’ of the European Union. As such, it does not see differentiated integration as a viable option for the country.

¹³⁸ Author’s translation: “Beslutningen om å si nei til medlemskap i EU var ikke noen beslutning om å si nei til samarbeid med EU. Utviklingen i EU er stadig viktigere for Norge. Norske interesser sikres best gjennom et bredest mulig samarbeid med EU og EU-landene. EU mottar i dag ca. 80 prosent av vår eksport. EØS-avtalen er derfor helt avgjørende for at mest mulig av næringslivet skal ha de samme vilkår som sine konkurrenter”.

¹³⁹ “Within the Party today, there are smaller groups who are not too enthusiastic for membership. But at every convention every 4 years when the Party programme is decided, there is about 100% of votes supporting EU membership” (Interview with a MP from the Conservative Party, 12 October 2012).

¹⁴⁰ Interview with two spokespersons from the Conservative Party, 7 November 2012.

5.2.2. Social Democratic Party

Founded in 1887 by trade union activists, the Labour Party has been Norway's largest political party since 1927 (Strøm and Leipart 1989; Heidar 2001). Originally composed of three main tendencies (Communists, Labour and Social Democrats), the party split when it briefly became member of the Komintern between 1919 and 1923, before being reunited with its Social Democratic faction. Despite its different background, the Labour Party is ideologically close to other European social democratic parties, including its Finnish and Swedish counterparts.¹⁴¹ Throughout the period analysed, the party's electoral performance at the national level fluctuated between 24.3 per cent (in 2001) and 36.9 per cent (in 1993).

The party's position on European integration has been mostly positive, despite strong internal divisions on the issue of membership. However, these preferences have evolved over time. In 1989, whereas the party congress voted a resolution stating that "it is neither necessary nor desirable that Norway take a position on membership now" (quoted and translated in Saglie 2000: 98), the party manifesto emphasised the necessity to join the internal market through the future EEA agreement (Arbeiderpartiet 1989). Following Norway's application for an EU membership in 1992, the 1993 Labour manifesto was mostly focused on the issue of European integration in its broad meaning. First, it emphasised the importance of the EEA for Norway (and, more generally, small countries). Second, it supported the application for an EU membership "[...] because [the Labour Party] believe[s] that Norway naturally fits in a committed relationship with democratic countries in our own continent" (Arbeiderpartiet 1993),¹⁴² but also highlighted the conditions to join the European Union: "it is essential that Norway retains control of Norwegian natural resources, and that we can find a good agreement for primary industries and regional policy" (ibid.).¹⁴³ Third, the manifesto emphasised the benefits of EU membership for Norway with regard to the party's key objectives: securing

¹⁴¹ "The history is slightly different from other European Labour Parties or Social Democratic Parties, but now, they look alike to a bigger extent" (Interview with a former MP from the Labour Party, 7 November 2012).

¹⁴² Author's translation: "Arbeiderpartiet vil at Norge skal søke om medlemskap i EF, fordi vi mener at Norge hører naturlig hjemme i et forpliktende samarbeid med de demokratiske land i vår egen verdensdel".

¹⁴³ Author's translation: "I forhandlingene vil vi legge avgjørende vekt på at Norge får beholde kontrollen over norske naturressurser og at vi finner gode løsninger for primærnæringene og distriktspolitikken".

employment, welfare, security and peace; enhancing co-operation with other social democratic parties in Europe; the opportunity for Norway to shape the future of European integration, especially in terms of labour, social and environmental policies. Finally, it discussed the importance of NATO in terms of foreign policy, and opposed the creation of a common foreign and security policy. Despite the relatively positive attitude towards membership as stated in this manifesto, there were strong divisions within the party. In October 1993, a fraction of the Labour Party created an organised group named 'Social Democrats against EU' (*Sosialdemokrater mot EU*) which heavily campaigned against membership throughout 1994 until the date of the referendum. This weakened the pro-EU campaign as well as the Labour government (see further section 5.3.2).

In 1997, and following these strong internal divisions, the Labour position on European integration was tempered. The party leadership accepted the electorate's decision to reject membership in 1994, and this decision subsequently constituted the basis of the Labour's European policy for the 1997-2001 parliamentary term. However, the manifesto stated the party's willingness to co-operate with the European Union as closely as possible in policy areas such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. The prominence of NATO as the basis of the Norwegian foreign policy was also highlighted. Finally, the party did not rule out a future application for membership, "[...] if there are any major changes in terms of European co-operation" (Arbeiderpartiet 1997).¹⁴⁴

In 2001, the Labour Party adapted its programme according to the international context, taking account of the upcoming 'big bang enlargement' and the launch of the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union. Whereas it outlined the benefits of existing agreements with the EU and the importance of NATO, the Labour manifesto seemed to promote differentiated integration:

¹⁴⁴ Author's translation: "En ny vurdering av spørsmålet om EU-medlemskap vil bare være naturlig dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i det europeiske samarbeidet."

[The Labour Party] believe[s] that Norway must take advantage of the opportunities our current form of association provides, both for close coordination with the EU where it is desirable and to have a separate policy where appropriate. In this way, we can reduce the risk of foreign political marginalisation of Norway in the light of developments within the EU. We must always have an open debate in which the benefits of being outside [of the EU] must prevail over the disadvantages (Arbeiderpartiet 2001).¹⁴⁵

2005 marked a series of major changes in the Labour Party's position on European co-operation. Indeed, internal divisions on the membership issue were mentioned and it was stated if the question of membership was raised in parliament, this would require a new Labour congress to decide on the party's stance. Nevertheless, the manifesto mentioned the need to strengthen co-operation with the European Union. These positions were reiterated in the 2009 manifesto (Arbeiderpartiet 2005; 2009).

In sum, the Labour party has been divided on the issue of European integration and has had moderate views on the membership issue due to these strong internal divisions. As summarised by an interviewee:

In our programme, we say that the best would have been for Norway to be member of the European Union, because that would have made us also a part of the political project and give us influence over decisions which concern us, but we are also a party where there are different views on this issue. [...] After the 1994 referendum, [...] every time the EU has expanded its co-operation, we wanted to participate, and we would want to go for further integration.¹⁴⁶

In other words, the party adapted its position on EU membership following the outcome of the 1994 referendum. While remaining outside of the Union, the party has advocated differentiated integration through close co-operation in policy areas which would be beneficial to Norway. The party has also acknowledged the importance of existing agreements with the EU and the relevance of NATO as a cornerstone of Norway's foreign and defence policy.

¹⁴⁵ Author's translation: "Arbeiderpartiet mener at Norge må utnytte de muligheter vår nåværende tilknytningsform gir, både til nær koordinering med EU der det er ønskelig og til å føre en egen politikk der det er formålstjenlig. Bare slik kan vi dempe faren for utenrikspolitisk marginalisering av Norge i lys av utviklingen innad i EU. Vi må derfor hele tiden føre en åpen debatt hvor fordelene ved å stå utenfor avveies mot ulempe".

¹⁴⁶ Interview with a MP from the Labour Party, 23 October 2012.

5.2.3. Agrarian Party

The Centre Party (formerly named Farmers' Party, *Bondepartiet*) is an agrarian party who was founded in 1920. Initially a party "of farmers for farmers and their families" (Heidar 2001: 68), the industrialisation of Norway led to a change in the party line, in order to attract new voters especially in urban areas (Elder and Gooderham 1978). On a left-right scale, the Centre Party has traditionally been located between the Liberals and the Conservatives and favoured co-operation with both of these parties as well as with the Christian Democrats (Arntzen and Knudsen 1980). However, after Sp's decision to join a left-wing coalition government with the Labour and the Socialist Left parties in 2005, this ideological position has been more difficult to draw. Since the collapse of the Syse coalition (see section 5.3.1), the party has considered that "the old left-right divide [...] had become obsolete" (Heidar 2001: 68). Except following the 1993 general election when it became the second largest party of Norway with 16.7 per cent, the Centre Party's electoral score remained stable and fluctuated between 5.6 per cent (in 2001) and 7.9 per cent (in 1997).

One of the key political aspects defended by the Centre Party is the decentralisation of power. In the views of the party, bureaucracy should be avoided and "uniformity hinders development" (Senterpartiet 1993).¹⁴⁷ Throughout the period analysed, the party has opposed any forms of institutionalised European integration, as the party sees the EU as a bureaucratic tool to transfer national powers to a supranational institution damaging democracy and economic growth. As an alternative to European integration, the Centre Party wants to promote "an all-European co-operation between independent nations" (*ibid.*).¹⁴⁸ In other words, the party does not advocate European integration or differentiated integration, but co-operation based on the principles of international law (Senterpartiet 1993; 1997; 2001; 2005).

In 1989, while the membership issue was not salient and in response to the future creation of the internal market, the Centre Party advocated bilateral contacts between Norway and the (then) EC in order to avoid trade obstacles between the two actors. In 1993, the party successfully became the main actor of the campaign against EU membership, and the

¹⁴⁷ Author's translation: "Ensretting hemmer utvikling".

¹⁴⁸ Author's translation: "Senterpartiets alternativ er et all-europeisk samarbeid mellom selvstendige nasjoner."

European debate was the central theme of their manifesto: while opposing both EU and EEA memberships, the party defended the free trade agreement as the basis for European co-operation (Senterpartiet 1993). This stance was renewed in the 1997 manifesto, and extended to the Schengen agreement: in the party's views, Norway should be free to pursue an independent asylum and visa policy (Senterpartiet 1997).

In 2001, the party took a milder stance on the EEA agreement, while remaining firmly opposed to EU membership and participation in the AFSJ, mostly through Schengen. Indeed, instead of fully opposing EEA membership as it did in the previous years, the party called for a *re-evaluation* of this agreement which could give birth to a Swiss-type of bilateral co-operation. Nevertheless, the party reiterated its willingness to terminate Norwegian participation to the EEA scheme in the 2005 and 2009 manifestos, thus calling for a form of differentiated *disintegration* (Senterpartiet 2005; 2009). The party has also consistently rejected participation in the CFSP and has considered the future creation of a European army of 100,000 men as an "aggressive fighting force",¹⁴⁹ stating that NATO should remain the main actor in terms of foreign and security policy (Senterpartiet 2001). Furthermore, following the creation of EU Battle Group concept in 2004, the party has consistently opposed Norway's involvement in such policy (Senterpartiet 2005; 2009).

In sum, the Centre Party has the most radical views towards European integration amongst parties represented in the Storting. Furthermore, party members have not been divided on the question and are strongly opposed to institutionalised co-operation with Brussels as well. While European integration has been considered as one of the key issues on the party's political agenda, Sp is also considered as the main responsible for the collapse of the Syse coalition government in 1990 (see further section 5.3.1). Throughout the period analysed, the Centre Party's position thus remained relatively stable and could be summarised as follows: no to EU membership, no to the EEA, no to Schengen or to any institutionalised agreement with the European Union, but yes to EFTA and to co-operation on the principles of international law.

¹⁴⁹ Author's translation "Styrken vil være bygd opp som en slagkraftig og offensiv kampstyrke".

5.2.4. Liberal Party

Founded in 1884, the Liberal Party (whose Norwegian name, *Venstre*, is literally translated as ‘the Left’) is together with Høyre the oldest political party in Norway. Originally, the party was created in order to defend the interests of the Norwegian nation in the Union between Sweden and Norway (Arter 2008). While Venstre was one of the largest parties represented in the Storting until 1945, its electoral score has drastically declined since then. The party suffered from an identity crisis in the late 1980s and early 1990s which led the party to lose all parliamentary representation (Heidar 2001). Following the 1993 election and throughout the rest of the period analysed, Venstre re-established itself in the Storting but remained as a small party, gaining between 3.6 per cent (in 1993) and 5.9 per cent (in 2005) in national elections.

The Liberal Party’s support for European integration has varied per policy area. In 1989, while the party suggested that it was not the right time to apply for an EU membership, it was open to the debate and considered that a thorough discussion on Norway’s relationship with the European institutions should take place during the 1989-1993 parliamentary term (Venstre 1989). However, it should be borne in mind that following the 1989 general election, Venstre was not successful in securing representation in the Storting. In 1993, the party decided to stand against membership, advocating the EEA agreement as the basis for Norway’s co-operation with the EU. In the party’s views, the newly negotiated EEA agreement enabled Norway to be more flexible in key areas such as foreign policy and international trade, and was perceived as beneficial as it did not as it did not include agricultural and fisheries policies (Venstre 1993). The 1997 manifesto contained a section entitled “yes to Europe – no to EU membership” (Venstre 1997),¹⁵⁰ in which the party remained in favour of European co-operation within the framework of existing agreements (mostly through the EEA). The party went even further by mentioning its willingness to promote the EEA as an alternative membership for new applicant states, thus advocating more horizontal differentiation across Europe. Similarly, the 2001, 2005 and 2009 manifestos mentioned the fact that this agreement has worked well for Norwegian economic interests and should be further developed (Venstre 2001; 2005; 2009). In 2005, the party seemed more flexible on the EU membership issue and mentioned in its manifesto that even though the party leadership did not want to join the

¹⁵⁰ Author’s translation: “Ja til Europa, nei til EU-medlemskap”.

EU, it acknowledged that some of its members and supporters were in favour of a membership (Venstre 2005; 2009).

Interestingly enough, none of the Liberal Party manifestos avoided discussing the Schengen agreement or AFSJ-related policies. This can be explained by the fact that the party has been strongly divided on this issue.¹⁵¹ However, Venstre has consistently supported developments of the CFSP and believed that Norway should fully contribute to such policy without undermining the importance of NATO (Venstre 2001; 2005; 2009).

Venstre is thus a political party advocating current forms of horizontal differentiated integration: while European co-operation should be based on the EEA agreement, the Party has also advocated participation in other policy areas such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

5.2.5. Christian Democratic Party

Founded in 1933 in Western counties before becoming a national party in 1945, the Christian Democratic Party was originally created following the lay Church movement's dissatisfaction on the lack of Christian influence within the Liberal Party (Arter 2008; on events regarding the creation of the party, see Karvonen 1993). KrF was the first party of its type to be created in the Nordic states, and served as a model to the creation of its Danish, Finnish and Swedish counterparts. Between 1989 and 2009, its electoral score fluctuated between 5.5 per cent (in 2009) and 13.7 per cent (in 1997). It was also represented in three government coalitions, notably under the influence of their former leader, Kjell Magne Bondevik, who served as Prime Minister during nearly seven years (1997-2000 and 2001-2005).

The Christian Democratic Party's attitude towards European integration has been relatively stable and is quite similar to the one adopted by the Liberal Party. Throughout the period analysed, whereas the party was formally opposed to an EU membership and considered that NATO should remain the main actor in terms of Norway's foreign and security policy, it advocated a close co-operation with the European institutions in various areas. In 1989, the party wanted Norway to join the future Single Market in co-operation

¹⁵¹ These internal divisions within the Liberal party will be illustrated in section 5.3.4.

and consultation with other EFTA countries and thus supported the future EEA agreement (Kristelig Folkeparti 1989). In 1993, while opposing membership, the party stated its willingness to increase Norwegian participation in European co-operation “in areas such as the environment, education, the fight against racism and against terrorism”¹⁵² as well as issues related to health, safety and security (Kristelig Folkeparti 1993). This stance was renewed in the 1997 and 2001 manifestos, which also mentioned the economic benefits on EEA membership for Norway (especially in terms of exports). It is important to note that much like the Liberal Party, there has been no mention of the Schengen agreement in those manifestos, at times when Norway’s participation in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice was a hot topic. An interviewee justified this absence of statement as such:

I think the honest answer would be that we knew we needed to do that [i.e. participate in the Schengen agreement, author’s note], but a bit half-hearted... to ‘accept’ rather than to ‘fight for’ it. We need co-operation on security and justice and fighting crime, and so on, and that is what Schengen is all about. So I think our party has considered it as a tool to achieve those needs of co-operation but we also see some challenges, such as the lack of control of our own borders.¹⁵³

Furthermore, due to European developments in the Common Foreign and Security Policy in the late 1990s, the 2001 manifesto stated that whereas NATO should remain the cornerstone in terms of Norway’s foreign and security policy, the country “should actively engage in co-operation and ensure adequate influence on the decision-making process in the EU, including through participation in various working groups and by adequate consultation arrangements” (Kristelig Folkeparti 2001).¹⁵⁴ Similarly, the party advocated close co-operation with supranational institutions in order to strengthen human rights, democracy, economic development, peace and stability in Europe.

In 2005, KrF reiterated its previous positions towards European integration: “[...] the current forms of association with the EU still serve our country best” (Kristelig Folkeparti 2005).¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, the 2005 manifesto stipulated that agreements in policy areas such

¹⁵² Author’s translation: “[...] økt samarbeid i Europa på områder som miljø, utdanning, anti-rasistisk arbeid og arbeid mot terrorisme”.

¹⁵³ Interview with a policy adviser from the Christian Democratic Party, 17 July 2013.

¹⁵⁴ Author’s translation: “[...] Norge bør ta aktivt del i samarbeidet og sikre seg tilfredsstillende innflytelse på beslutningsprosessen i EU bl.a. gjennom deltakelse i ulike arbeidsgrupper og ved gode konsultasjonsordninger.”

¹⁵⁵ Author’s translation: “[...] mener KrF at de nåværende tilknytningsformer til EU fremdeles tjener landet vårt best”.

as agriculture, fisheries, management of natural resources and the monetary union would not be beneficial for Norway.¹⁵⁶ The 2009 manifesto did not bring major changes to these positions, besides stating the fact that an EU membership would impair Norway's flexibility in several key areas, e.g. peace mediation and conflict resolution (Kristelig Folkeparti 2009).

KrF's position on European integration has thus remained relatively stable throughout the years: no to EU membership, but yes to political and economic integration as long as it serves Norway's interests best. In the party's views, NATO should remain the key international actor in terms of foreign and security policy, but the party has also advocated co-operation with the European Union in this area. Similarly to other Norwegian parties, this stance follows the logic of differentiated integration.

5.2.6. 'New Politics' Parties

In contrast to the Finnish and Swedish party systems, there is no well-established green party in Norway. This is mostly explained by the fact that the Socialist Left Party has one important environmental dimension within its programme (see next sub-section). In fact, the Norwegian Green Party (*Miljøpartiet De Grønne*) won its first parliamentary seat following the 2013 general election, which is not analysed within the framework of this study.

5.2.6.1. Socialist Left Party

The Socialist Left Party was founded in 1975 as a merger of several left-wing groups or "left-of-Labour merger" (Heidar 2001: 69). These groups are: the Socialist People's Party (*Sosialistisk Folkeparti*), one of the former opposition group within the Labour Party who was created in 1961; the Communist Party (*Norges Kommunistiske Parti*); some independent socialists; and the Information Committee of the Labour Movement against Norwegian Membership in the European Community (*Arbeiderbevegelsens informasjonskomité mot norsk medlemskap i EF*), which was a splinter group from the then pro-EC Labour Party (Arntzen

¹⁵⁶ Participation in the Customs Union was added to that list in the 2009 manifesto (Kristelig Folkeparti 2009).

and Knudsen 1980). The formation of this ‘new left’ party was the first indicator of the end of the traditional five-party model (Christensen 1998). The main objective of SV, from its early years onwards, has been international non-alignment (Arter 2008). Throughout the 1980s, the party moved towards a ‘green’ ideology, putting the protection of the environment on top of its agenda. However, SV cannot be considered as a green party per se, due to its internal organisation and political strategy (Heidar 2001). Nevertheless, the party considers itself as close to other European socialist and green parties, as mentioned in some of its manifestos (Sosialistisk Venstreparti 1993; 1997; 2001). Between 1989 and 2009, SV’s electoral score fluctuated between 6 per cent (in 1997) and 12.5 per cent (in 2001). The party was also a coalition member in both terms of the Stoltenberg II cabinet.

Due to its historical composition, SV’s position on European integration has been unsurprisingly critical. From the late 1980s onwards, the party has stood against European co-operation, arguing that Norway’s relationship with the EU should be based on the EFTA agreement and intergovernmental decision-making. Nevertheless, this position should be clarified, as the party has not been opposed to all aspects of European integration. In 1989, the party opposed the idea of an EC membership as well as “uncritical adaptation to the EC internal market” (Sosialistisk Venstreparti 1989).¹⁵⁷ In other words, SV was initially *not* opposed to joining the Single Market, stating that Norway would benefit from European integration in policy areas such as health and safety regulations, consumer and environmental protection. In 1993, the Socialist Left Party adopted a negative stance towards EU membership and extended it to the EEA agreement. Furthermore, the 1993 manifesto criticised the evolution of European integration in terms of foreign and security policy (Sosialistisk Venstreparti 1993). In 1997, in addition to the positions outlined above, the party mentioned its opposition to the Schengen agreement, which was seen as harming the principle of national sovereignty (Sosialistisk Venstreparti 1997). In 2001, SV enumerated the benefits of Norway’s status as non-member of the EU, outlining e.g. “a far simpler agricultural and fisheries policy”,¹⁵⁸ a “small, transparent society” versus “the large, complex EU”¹⁵⁹ and Norway’s freedom

¹⁵⁷ Author’s translation: “SV vil bekjempe den ukritiske tilpasningen til EFs indre marked”.

¹⁵⁸ Author’s translation: “Vi kan også langt enklare føre ein landbruks- og fiskeripolitikk”.

¹⁵⁹ Author’s translation: “På det økonomiske området er det langt enklare å sikre full sysselsetting, sosial tryggleik og små skilnader i levekår i eit lite, oversiktleg samfunn slik vi no er, enn i det store, samansette EU-området”.

in terms of foreign policy (Sosialistisk Venstreparti 2001). It also rejected the creation of a European defence force, as co-operation in this area should, in the party's views, take place within the framework of NATO. In its 2005 and 2009 manifestos, the party stance towards European integration remained unchanged: SV advocated close co-operation between Norway and other countries of Europe through intergovernmental agreements and not within the framework of the European Union. In addition, SV mentioned that it did not want Norway to contribute to the Nordic Battle Group (Sosialistisk Venstreparti 2005; 2009).

The Socialist Left Party thus shares the same views as the Centre Party in terms of European integration: no to binding memberships and to institutionalised co-operation with the European Union, but yes to co-operation within the framework of the Free Trade Agreement. This constitutes one of the founding positions of the party, and it has not been challenged by its members.

5.2.6.2. Populist Right Party

The Progress Party is Norway's youngest well-established party, founded in 1973 under the name of "Ander Lange's Party for a Strong Reduction in Taxes, Duties and Public Intervention" (*Anders Langes Parti til sterk nedsettelse av skatter, avgifter og offentlige inngrep*), which gained four seats on the same year (Harmel and Svåsand 1993). Originally built on anti-tax grounds and following the example of the Danish Progress Party (*Fremskridtspartiet*) created a year earlier, the party line has progressively evolved to become an anti-immigrant party by the late 1980s (Heidar 2001). As such, the Progress Party is mostly considered as a populist right party (see for instance Arter 2008; Fossum 2010). At a time when small new parties were not successful in establishing themselves amongst the traditional Norwegian parties, the Progress Party was able to gather enough votes in order to be permanently represented in the Storting since 1981, and to eventually become the second largest party of Norway in 2009. This was made possible by combining views against immigration with "welfare chauvinism and a demand for spending on the elderly, young-parent families, hospitals and so on" (Arter 2008: 118-119). The party also benefited from an increase in electoral volatility which occurred in the 1980s.

Unlike any other well-established parties in Norway, the position of the Progress Party on European integration is rather unclear. According to Fossum (2010: 82), the party “sees itself as a receiver, rather than a shaper, of popular opinion” on the issue of EU membership. An interviewee mentioned that the Progress Party tends to remain neutral on the issue of EU membership, but considers itself in favour of European integration as it supports agreements such as the EEA and Schengen.¹⁶⁰

It is interesting to outline the evolution of the party’s stance towards European integration per policy area, as stated in the manifestos for the period considered in this analysis. In 1989, a few years before the submission of Norway’s application for an EU membership, the party mentioned its willingness to “clarify Norway’s relationship to the EC and put the issue of membership to a referendum” (Fremskrittspartiet 1989).¹⁶¹ In 1993, shortly before the accession treaty was negotiated, a more elaborate position on European integration was developed, summarised by the stance “yes to the EC – no to the Union” (Fremskrittspartiet 1993).¹⁶² In other words, the general line of the party opposed the Maastricht Treaty but supported the EEA agreement. However, party members and MPs were free to support or oppose EU membership, which eventually led to strong divisions within the party during the 1994 national convention. As a result, four Progress MPs left the party to form an independent group in the Storting (Heidar 1995). Following the victory of the No-side, the 1997 party manifesto did not discuss issues relating to European integration: in fact, this document did not have a section on ‘Norway and Europe’ (*Norge og Europa*), as it was the case for all other manifestos released between 1989 and 2009. Instead, this section was replaced by another entitled ‘Norway and the world’ (*Norge og verden*). From 2001 onwards, the Progress Party advocated closer cooperation between Norway and the European Union in policy fields requiring supranational solutions, such as crime, security, the environment, free trade, economic competition and human rights (Fremskrittspartiet 2001; 2005; 2009). On the issue of security, however, the party considered that participation in NATO should remain the

¹⁶⁰ “[...] We stay neutral on the issue of EU membership. We are pro-EEA, we are in favour of Norway being a member of Schengen. So at the moment, we are in favour of European integration. We are definitely in favour of having a constant look at the agreements: how they benefit Norway, how they can be improved, being open to renegotiations. But having a firm agreement with the EU, which commits us and makes us part of the internal market, is positive” (Interview with a MP from the Progress Party, 22 October 2012).

¹⁶¹ Author’s translation: “Avklare Norges forhold til EF og legge spørsmålet om medlemskap frem til folkeavstemning”.

¹⁶² Author’s translation: “Ja til EF – Nei til Union”.

cornerstone.¹⁶³ As summarised by an interviewee, “[i]n Norway, you will find some parties which are negative, saying that the EU goes too far in liberalising some sectors, [...] that criticism you will not find in our party. Maybe you will have some issues regarding some of those directives, but in general, we are in favour of as much liberalisation as we can find”.¹⁶⁴

In a nutshell, while it has not developed an official stance other than following public opinion on the issue of EU membership, the Progress Party has been in favour of European integration mostly through the EEA and other existing agreements, thus advocating differentiated integration. Further European integration could be conceivable for the party, as long as this compels with its main objectives of individual freedom and globalisation.

5.2.7. Party positions – summary

Table 5.2 Norwegian parties’ positions on participation in European integration (1990 – 2010), by selected policy area

	EU	EEA	CFSP	AFSJ	EMU ¹
H	++	++	++	++	N/A
A	0 (before 1992) + (1992-1994) 0 (after 1994)	++	+	+	N/A
Sp	--	--	--	--	N/A
V	-	+	+	0	N/A
KrF	--	+	+	0	N/A
SV	--	--	--	--	N/A
FrP	0	++	+	+	N/A

¹ Due to Norway’s status as non-member of the EU, the EMU issue has not been politically salient.

++ = official party line in favour of co-operation in this area, no internal divisions

+ = official party line in favour of co-operation in this area, internal divisions

0 = neutral or no official position on participation in this area

- = official party line opposed to co-operation in this area, internal divisions

-- = official party line opposed to co-operation in this area, no internal divisions

¹⁶³ “On defence, I would not say that we would change something, because it is important to continue having relevant co-operation where we feel that it is natural. We have to look at it in the context of NATO. You should not have duplication on the structures. NATO remains the cornerstone. Ideally, I would like to see European co-operation on security within NATO” (Interview with a MP from the Progress Party, 22 October 2012).

¹⁶⁴ Interview with a MP from the Progress Party, 22 October 2012.

Based on interview and manifesto analyses, Table 5.2 gives a general summary of the parties' positions on European integration per policy area. Whereas the Conservative Party and, to a lower extent, the Labour Party (who was constrained by its electorate and internal divisions), have been the only supporters of membership, such table again demonstrates the importance of taking into account the concept of differentiated integration when analysing party preferences. Indeed, all party preferences regarding European co-operation vary depending on each policy areas. This is particularly the case for FrP, KrF and V, who have mixed views on integration. On the other hand, both Sp and SV have been strongly opposed to any forms of institutionalised co-operation with Brussels.

The following section will now focus on the Norwegian executive power and will analyse all policy challenges governments had to face on European co-operation.

5.3. Norwegian governments and their positions on European Integration (1989-2011)

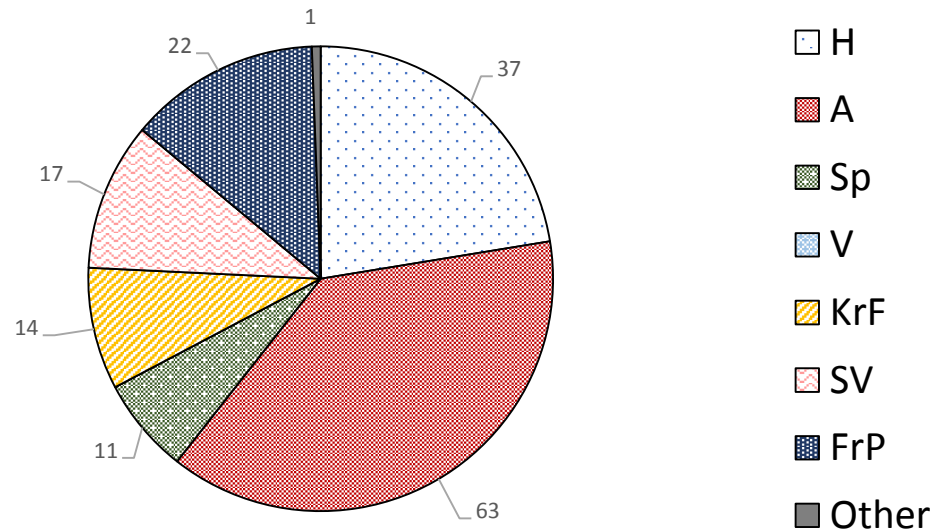
Between 1989 and 2009, six parliamentary elections were held and seven cabinets were formed. Table 5.3 details the general composition of these cabinets, from Syse (1990-1991) to Stoltenberg II (2005-2013). The aim of this section is to analyse government policies on European integration. As in the two previous empirical chapters, this section mostly focuses on major policies that were strongly politicised and discussed in the Storting: the EEA agreement; EU membership; Schengen; and the Nordic Battle Group. As mentioned in section 5.1, participation in the EMU has never been salient in Norway, as the country did not join the European Union: this policy is thus not analysed in the Norwegian case.

Table 5.3 List and characteristics of Norwegian cabinets, 1989 – 2013

Dates	Cabinet	Party/parties included	Government position on a left-right scale (Kim and Fording index)	Percentage of government's share of MPs
16 October 1989 – 3 November 1990	Syse	Conservative Party Christian Democratic Party Centre Party	-14.23	37.6%
3 November 1990 – 14 September 1993	Brundtland III	Labour Party	-36	38.2%
14 September 1993 – 17 October 1997	Brundtland IV / Jagland	Labour Party	-19.7	40.6%
17 October 1997 – 17 March 2000	Bondevik I	Christian Democratic Party Centre Party Liberal Party	-7.14	25.5%
17 March 2000 – 19 October 2001	Stoltenberg I	Labour Party	-18.1	39.4%
19 October 2001 – 17 October 2005	Bondevik II	Conservative Party Christian Democratic Party Liberal Party	-3.16	37.6%
17 October 2005 – 20 October 2009	Stoltenberg II, first mandate	Labour Party Socialist Left Party Centre Party	-31.23	52.7%
20 October 2009 – 16 October 2013	Stoltenberg II, second mandate	Labour Party Socialist Left Party Centre Party	-29.98	52.1%

5.3.1. Syse (16 October 1989 – 3 November 1990)

Figure 5.2 Composition of the Storting following the 1989 election, per seats



Source: Aardal (1990).

In the context of a severe banking crisis that hit the country, parliamentary elections took place on 10 and 11 September 1989.¹⁶⁵ Following this election, the Conservative Party, together with the Christian Democratic and Centre parties, created a non-socialist (or bourgeois) minority coalition with Jan Peder Syse (Conservative) as prime minister (Archer 2005). According to the government's partisanship based on Kim and Fording's index (-14.23), it is nevertheless considered as a leftist government, mostly because the manifestos of all three parties discussed left-wing values such as education, internationalism and expansion of social services, as a consequence of the banking crisis.

Within the coalition agreement, and despite divergences on the issue European integration (especially coming from the Centre Party), the parties agreed to support negotiations on the future EEA agreement. Nevertheless, the agreement stated that "the government must base its relationship with the EC and adjustment policies to the EC

¹⁶⁵ As the thesis focuses on the 1990-2010 period and as the European issue only became salient in the mid-1990s, the 1989 general election and the context surrounding it are not considered. For an in-depth analysis, see e.g. Aardal (1990).

Single Market on the grounds that Norway is not a member of the EC”,¹⁶⁶ thus ruling out a potential application for full membership (Government of Norway 1989).

When negotiations over the EEA agreement started on 20 June 1990, strong divisions within the coalition became visible, and October 1990 turned out to be a crucial month for the Syse cabinet. Indeed, the Centre Party defended the right for Norway to be exempted from EC regulations in order to favour Norwegian investors over foreign businessmen. This possibility was ruled out by the European Commission on the grounds that it would undermine the basis of the Single Market: “[f]or the Centre Party, a foreign take-over of Norwegian resources was also unacceptable and a betrayal of national policies going back to the early days of independence. The party resigned from the centre-right government which then fell from office” (Archer 2005: 56).

In sum, it was the Centre Party’s opposition to EEA negotiations that precipitated the fall of the Syse coalition, which remained in power for only 13 months. As outlined in section 5.2.3, national sovereignty has constituted one of the core issues defended by the Centre Party, which still remains strongly opposed to any kind of institutionalised European co-operation. This position conflicted with the one advocated by the Conservative Party and the Christian Democratic Party, as they both strongly supported EEA negotiations. These differing views were hardly reconcilable: Heidar (1995) rightly predicted that as long as the ‘Europe’ issue remained salient, it would be unlikely to see this traditional Conservative-Agrarian coalition rise again.

5.3.2. Brundtland III (3 November 1990 – 14 September 1993)

Following Syse’s resignation, a single party minority left-wing government led by former Labour Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland took over on 3 November 1990. Its main priority was to continue negotiations on the EEA, which eventually led to an agreement submitted to the Storting in October 1992. As such, the government avoided putting Norway’s application for an EU membership on the agenda as the Labour Party was strongly divided on this issue (Svåsand 1992; see also section 5.2.2). As the EEA implied a delegation of sovereignty to a supranational organisation, the Storting considered this

¹⁶⁶ Author’s translation: “Regjeringen må basere sitt forhold til EF og tilpasningspolitikken til EFs indre marked på at Norge ikke er medlem av EF”.

agreement under paragraph 93 of the Constitution, requiring three-quarters of the votes in order to be adopted (Archer 1995). While a broad majority of the ruling Labour Party supported this agreement, the Conservatives and Christian Democrats also decided to bring their support. Conversely, the Socialist Left Party and the Centre Party opposed such agreement, considering that the EEA “involved infringements on Norwegian sovereignty” (Svåsand 1992: 487). In total, 79 per cent of MPs voted in favour of the EEA agreement: this constituted more than the required three-quarters majority. Table 5.4 outlines the distribution of votes by political parties. In sum, the EEA agreement was largely seen as beneficial for Norway, with the Socialist Left Party and the Centre Party being the only parties to unanimously reject it, in compliance with their attitudes towards European (and international) co-operation.

Table 5.4 Storting’s vote on the European Economic Area agreement, per party

	#MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / absents
A	63	61	2	0
H	37	37	0	0
Sp	11	0	11	0
KrF	14	11	3	0
SV	17	0	17	0
Fp	22	20	2	0
Other¹	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	165	131	34	0

Source: Storting’s archives.

¹The party Future for Finnmark (*Framtid for Finnmark*), represented by John Anders Aune, was a protest party that only got elected for one term, between 1989 and 1993.

As mentioned in section 5.1, Sweden and Finland’s applications for a full EU membership modified the political context surrounding the EEA, and the accession issue came back on the government’s agenda. Despite division amongst elites, the decision to apply for membership was adopted at the party level and Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland announced the intention of the government to submit such an application. This put the government in a difficult position: “[t]hroughout the year, the government party has been struggling with its anti-EC fraction as well as with the EC opposition in parliament (the Centre, Christian and Socialist Left parties)” (Svåsand (1993: 517). Furthermore, even though the Progress Party did not have an official position on this issue, its 1989

manifesto stipulated the willingness to hold a referendum on membership in order to clarify the country's relationship with Brussels: this meant that the government's proposition to submit Norway's application for a membership would also be supported by this party. As such, the Brundtland III government was able to rely on a sufficient parliamentary majority on this issue, despite strong divisions within the Storting and within the ruling party. Table 5.5 analyses the parliamentary vote on submitting the application for an EU membership.

Table 5.5 Storting's vote on submitting an application for European Union membership, per party

	# MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions
A	63	48	15	0
H	37	37	0	0
Fp	22	17	0	5
SV	17	0	17	0
KrF	14	2	12	0
Sp	11	0	11	0
Other	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	165	104	55	6

Source: Archer (2005); Storting's archives.

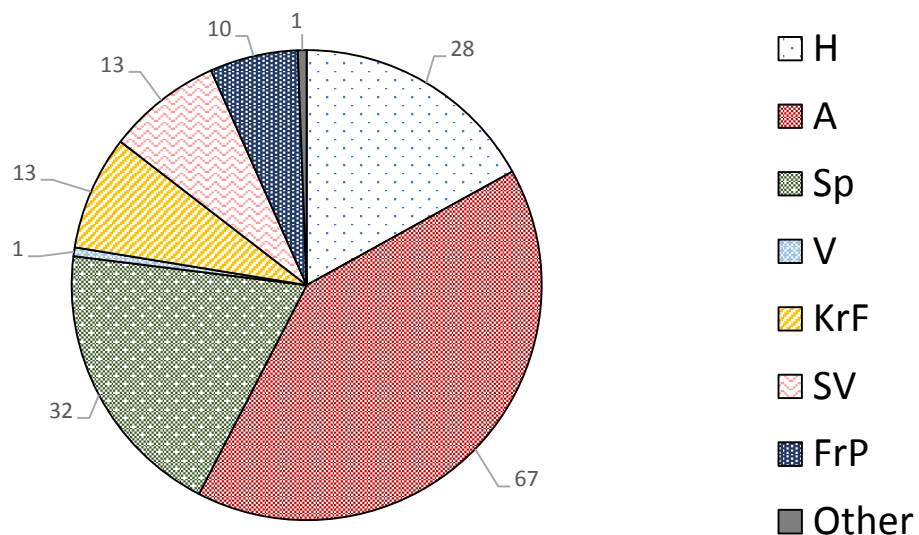
This vote mostly reflects party positions on European membership. While the Conservative Party was unanimously in favour, the Centre and Socialist Left parties were the most reluctant. Even though most Christian Democratic MPs voted in favour of the EEA agreement, they opposed such application for an EU membership. The Progress Party agreed to put the issue to a referendum once an accession treaty was negotiated, but also counted the only 5 MPs who abstained. Finally, about 24 per cent of the Labour representatives voted against, illustrating the existing internal divisions over the issue of European integration.

In sum, besides the influence of its Swedish and Finnish peers, the government's decision to apply for an EU membership was also facilitated by the composition of the Storting. Indeed, with the support of H and Fp, the ruling Labour Party was able to overcome internal divisions.

5.3.3. Brundtland IV and Jagland (14 September 1993 – 17 October 1997)

On 12-13 September 1993, a general election was held in Norway. The campaign surrounding this election was mostly centred on the application for an EU membership.¹⁶⁷ As developed throughout section 5.2, while the Conservative and Labour parties campaigned in favour of joining the Union, the Centre, Christian Democratic, Liberal and Socialist Left parties were strongly against. The Progress Party, on the other hand, opted for a ‘yes to the EC – no to the Union’ position, which was considered as unclear due to the recent ratification of the Maastricht Treaty.

Figure 5.3 Composition of the Storting following the 1993 election, per seats



Source: Heidar (1994).

The election results were particularly remarkable for the Centre Party with a gain of 21 seats compared to 1989. As a result, Sp became the second largest party in parliament for the first time of its history. The Labour Party, on the other hand, comforted its status as the largest party by gaining 3 additional seats.¹⁶⁸ Conversely, the Progress Party, the

¹⁶⁷ Two surveys analysed by Aardal (1994) show that the European Union was considered as the most important issue at the 1993 elections: 65 per cent of the voters considered that this issue was their main concern.

¹⁶⁸ Despite internal divisions on the EU issue, the Labour Party’s victory in the 1993 elections can be explained by two main reasons: the issue of ‘governability’ of the country played in their favour, and they were successful in neutralising the EU debate by convincing “many anti-EU voters that the election would not foreclose the question of EU membership” (Aardal 1994: 178).

Conservative Party and the Socialist Left Party respectively lost 12, 9 and 4 seats. The Christian Democratic Party remained quite stable, gaining one additional seat.

Post-election analyses show that the 'Europe' issue disrupted the party system: the turnout was relatively low for Norwegian standards (75.8 per cent) and electoral volatility increased amongst voters. As such, it appears that the membership issue was perceived as more important than party adherence (Aardal 1994; Heidar 1994; Valen 1994). Following this election, a new minority leftist Labour government, Brundtland IV, was formed on 14 September 1993. This new cabinet was not seriously challenged in the Storting, as no clear government alternatives were considered since the collapse of the Syse coalition (Heidar 1994; Valen 1994).

While negotiations with Brussels were ongoing, domestic discussions and divisions over the application for EU membership arose in October 1993, with the creation of the 'Social Democrats against EU' group within the Labour Party which was tolerated by its leadership, much like within its Swedish counterpart in a similar context (see section 4.3.3). In order to avoid losing voters linked to this anti-EU movement, the Brundtland IV administration "had to be careful about joining the front of free-marketeters at the right wing of Norwegian politics" (Heidar 1995: 446). This delicate political situation undoubtedly affected the pro-EU camp. 52.2 per cent of the Norwegian electorate eventually rejected membership on 27-28 November 1994. The referendum had the highest turnout in Norway's history (89 per cent), illustrating that the issue was sensitive enough to mobilise voters.¹⁶⁹

In the aftermath of the referendum, the Brundtland IV government remained in power, as the Prime Minister previously made it clear that this issue would not constitute a vote of confidence (Archer 2005). Throughout the rest of the mandate, the debate on European integration remained salient, as the government's strategy was to co-operate with the European Union as closely as possible while remaining outside the institution as such. This policy was criticised by the anti-EU parties and especially by the Centre Party, who interpreted the referendum result as a sign of a popular rejection of the European project (Heidar 1996).

¹⁶⁹ For a full analysis of the referendum, see e.g. Bjørklund (1996); Pettersen *et al.* (1996).

On 23 October 1996, Brundtland stepped down as Prime Minister, leaving this position to Labour Party Leader Thorbjørn Jagland who formed a cabinet with minor changes in its composition (Heidar 1997). In fact, this change did not affect the nature or the political line followed by the government. The future of European integration in Norway remained on top of its agenda, as discussions over the Schengen agreement and over the future of the CFSP were to take place.

The ratification of the Schengen agreement was one of the top priorities of both Brundtland IV and Jagland governments. On the one hand, this agreement was supported by a majority consisting of the Labour, the Conservative and the Progress parties, in the name of safeguarding Nordic collaboration and in order to enhance international police co-operation, “as Norway has suffered from the general increase in organized international crime during the 1990s” (Archer 2005: 158). On the other, the Centre, Socialist Left and Christian Democratic parties opposed this agreement on the grounds that it would entail a loss of sovereignty, and would open Norwegian borders to “international criminals” (ibid.). As such and in contrast to the domestic political situation in Finland and Sweden, there was a significant opposition to Norway’s participation in this policy. After the government signed an agreement with the Schengen member states on 19 December 1996, the ratification of the Schengen Agreement was approved by the Storting on 9 June 1997, with 75 votes in favour (Labour Party, Conservative Party and Progress Party) and 50 against (Centre Party, Christian Democratic Party, Socialist Left Party, Liberal Party and Red Electoral Alliance). However, the Intergovernmental Conference that took place in Amsterdam on 16-17 June 1997 invalidated the vote, as it was decided that Schengen would be incorporated into the revised EU treaty, implying a renegotiation of the agreement with Norway (Archer 2001). This was to take place under the next parliamentary term, as elections were to be held in October 1997 (see next section).

The issues of security and defence were also raised under the Brundtland IV and Jagland governments. Following the EU referendum, the Labour government decided to strengthen Norway’s relationship with NATO through the Western European Union,

which was the government's priority in terms of foreign and security policy.¹⁷⁰ At the end of Jagland's mandate (from mid-1997 onwards), major changes in the fields of foreign and security policy were expected, as it appeared clear that the WEU was about to be assimilated by the European Union following the Amsterdam Intergovernmental Conference. These international developments were seen as controversial for the Labour government, as there were strong internal divisions over the future of Norway's relationship with the Union. Furthermore, from 1993 onwards, all Labour Party manifestos have showed some signs of reluctance regarding developments on the CFSP, as the party considers that NATO should remain the cornerstone in terms of foreign and security policy, through participation in an independent WEU. Already in mid-1996, the Norwegian Ministry of Defence Jørgen Kosmo stated that "[f]rom a Norwegian point of view it is desirable that the WEU should remain an independent organization. This means that the WEU would in the future continue to have more or less equal links with the EU and NATO. [...] Norway would wish to see clarification on the status of associate members" (quoted in Archer 2005: 143). In sum, no major changes took place under Brundtland and Jagland's administrations in the field of foreign and security policy: international co-operation with NATO through the WEU remained the priority, but discussions over a potential assimilation of the WEU into the EU was problematic for Norway.

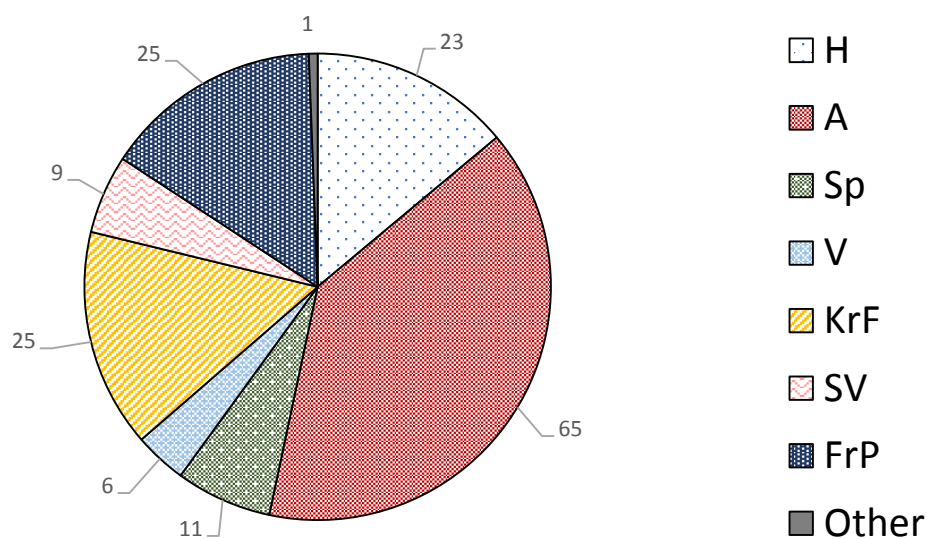
5.3.4. Bondevik I (17 October 1997 – 17 March 2000)

A general election was held on 15 September 1997. The 'Europe' issue remained salient in terms of coalition building: indeed, since the collapse of the Syse government, a bourgeois alliance consisting of the Centre and Conservative parties was not conceivable, reinforcing the possibility of renewing a single party minority government led by Jagland. Nevertheless, and for the first time in Norway's political history, a brand new government alternative was proposed during the election campaign by the Christian Democratic Party leader, Kjell Magne Bondevik. This alternative consisted of a coalition between three non-

¹⁷⁰ The Western European Union was not integrated to the European Union at that time, and operated as an independent international organisation. Until the Franco-British St Malo summit in 1998 and EU summits which took place in 1999, there was no plan to develop a Common Security and Defence Policy (see Rieker 2006; on the WEU, its role and its relationship with Norway throughout the 1990s, see e.g. Eliassen 1998; Archer 2005).

socialist parties: KrF, Sp and V. All three parties shared the same negative views on the issue of EU membership, but are split on participation in the European integration process, depending on the policy area (see Table 5.2). While observers did not consider such alternative as viable because of their divergences on integration (see e.g. Valen 1998), opinion polls progressively suggested that the Labour Party would lose seats, thus threatening the renewal of Jagland’s cabinet.

Figure 8.4 Composition of the Storting following the 1997 election, per seats



Source: Narud (1998).

Despite the Centre Party losing two thirds of its seats in the Storting¹⁷¹ (-22 compared to 1993) and the Conservatives (-5) failing to compete against the Progress Party (+15), the Labour Party (-2) is considered as the symbolic loser of the 1997 election. Indeed, during the election campaign, Prime Minister Jagland declared that his government would resign should his party receive fewer votes than in the 1993 elections (Narud 1998). This paved the way for Bondevik’s “centrist mini-coalition” (Narud 1999: 485), despite its small amount of parliamentary seats (42 out of 165, or 25.5 per cent of MPs). The Bondevik I cabinet was formed on 17 October 1997, one month after the elections. The government subsequently sought parliamentary co-operation with the Conservative and Progress parties, which gave their support on most domestic issues (ibid.).

¹⁷¹ According to Valen (1998), this major defeat is due to the fact that the 1993 elections were centred on the EU membership issue, which was highly politicised at that time.

As stated above, despite all being opposed to an EU membership, the parties composing this government coalition had different views on European integration, from the ‘pro-EEA’ Christian Democratic Party to the ‘anti-EU’ Centre Party. Nevertheless, the coalition agreement seemed to tend towards KrF’s preferences on integration: the government adopted a pro-EEA vision, with an “independent, national assessment of the legislation that derives from the EEA Agreement” (Government of Norway 1997), and NATO was reaffirmed as the cornerstone in terms of foreign and security policy. On participation in the AFSJ, the cabinet took account of the previous vote on Schengen and mentioned its willingness to evaluate the constitutional aspects of Norway’s co-operation in this agreement, despite the government’s reluctance:

The Government notes that there is a majority in the Storting in favour of negotiations concerning Norway's continued association with the Schengen co-operation. The Government will work to safeguard Norwegian interests, for example, by retaining the Nordic Passport Union, an issue in which Denmark's response will also be significant. An evaluation is now being made of the constitutional questions connected with a new Schengen agreement (ibid.).

With the help of the Nordic EU member states, an agreement on ‘Schengen II’ was reached in 1998 (Kux and Sverdrup 2000) and submitted to the Storting on 26 April 1999 (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.6 Storting’s vote on participation in the Schengen area, per party

	# MPs	#Yes	#No	#Abstentions / Absents
A	65	39	0	26
H	23	12	0	11
Fp	25	16	0	9
SV	9	0	7	2
KrF	25	14	2	9
Sp	11	0	9	2
V	6	4	0	2
Other	1	0	1	0
TOTAL	165	85	19	61

Source: Storting’s archives.

Interestingly enough, two governing parties who voted against ‘Schengen I’ in 1997 (i.e. the Christian Democrats and the Liberals) joined the Labour, the Conservatives and the Progress Party to vote in favour of the new agreement. Those two parties are also the ones who did not have an official stance on the Schengen agreement in their manifestos

(see Table 5.2). Two main reasons can explain this. First, this is due to the fact that the new agreement did not imply a loss of national sovereignty and that Norway could only be bound by laws accepted by national authorities (Archer 2005). As a result, both KrF and V decided to support 'Schengen II'. Conversely, the Centre Party remained firm on the agreement and considered it as unacceptable, together with the Socialist Left Party. Second and more importantly within the framework of this analysis, a majority of MPs in the opposition were in favour of participating in the Schengen area, including parties which supported the sitting government (i.e. the Conservative and Progress parties). As mentioned by an interviewee from the Christian Democratic Party, "we needed co-operation on security and justice and fighting crime, and that is what Schengen is all about. [...] Because of the political situation, we did not see many alternatives but to accept it" (see also section 5.2.5).¹⁷² 'Accepting' participation in the Schengen area is thus also explained by the fact that the minority government was constrained by its pro-Schengen parliamentary partners. In contrast to the Syse cabinet experience, the Centre Party's opposition to this policy did not threaten the existence of Bondevik I, as it was tolerated by its coalition partners as well as other parties of the opposition.

At times when the CFSP was under construction, the Norwegian government also had to face major changes and shape the evolution of its relationship with the European Union in this policy area. Until 1999, Norway's relationship with the EU foreign and security policy was rather loose, as NATO and the independent WEU were seen as the country's priorities (Sjursen 1999). At the dawning of the new century, Foreign Minister Knut Vollebæk suggested that Norway should keep on working in close co-operation with the EU by becoming an associate member of the new Common Security and Defence Policy (Græger 2005; Rieker 2006). This request was nevertheless rejected by the European Union, which did not want to undermine its decision-making system. Negotiations on Norway's potential participation in the CFSP went on until the resignation of Bondevik I on 17 March 2000, following debates over the construction of gas-fired power plants and a vote of confidence (Aalberg 2001).

¹⁷² Interview with a policy adviser from the Christian Democratic Party, 17 July 2013.

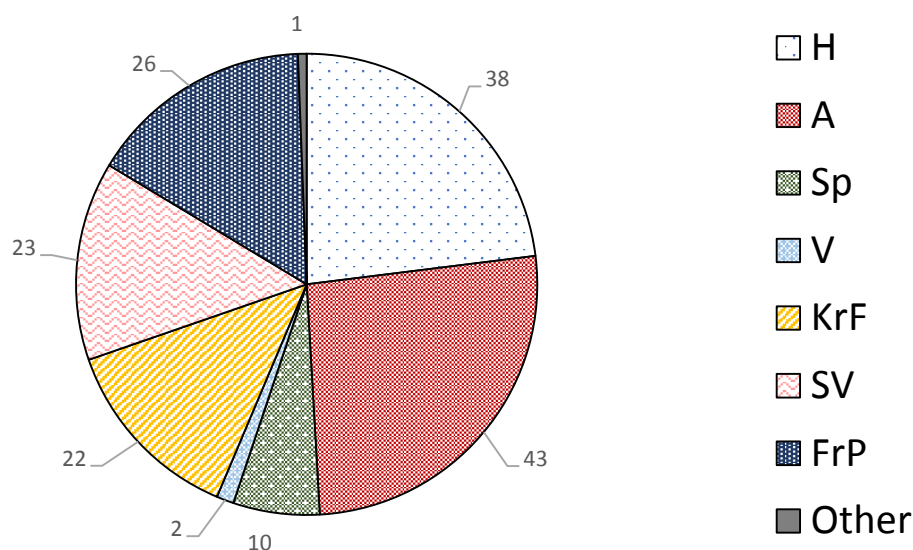
5.3.5. Stoltenberg I (17 March 2000 – 19 October 2001)

Following the resignation of the Bondevik I cabinet, a new single party minority leftist government led by Labour Party Leader Jens Stoltenberg took over. In his inaugural address to the Storting, the new Prime Minister stated that while European integration was on the threshold of major changes, the government would base Norway's co-operation with the European Union on existing agreements (Government of Norway 2000). As such, Stoltenberg I did not bring major changes to the previous government's policy on European integration. Negotiations on foreign and security issues were ongoing, and close co-operation through NATO was still privileged. As mentioned by Defence Minister Bjørn Tore Godal, "independent of the question of Norwegian EU membership, it is nevertheless in Norway's interest that NATO still appears as the primary forum for Western security and defence policy co-operation" (quoted in Græger 2005: 86). Attempts were made to revitalise the EU membership issue by some ministers and/or members of the Labour Party, especially through Foreign Minister (and former Prime Minister) Thorbjørn Jagland, who stated that as an EU-outsider, Norway could not influence institutional developments e.g. in terms of foreign and security policy. Nevertheless, these attempts were vain as a majority of political parties represented in the Storting, including the Progress Party, were opposed to reopening this debate (Aalberg 2001).

5.3.6. Bondevik II (19 October 2001 – 17 October 2005)

Unlike in 1989, 1993 and (to a lesser extent) 1997, European co-operation was not considered as a 'hot topic' during the 2001 national election campaign: instead, domestic issues relating to taxes, education as well as government alternatives were raised (Aalberg 2002).

Figure 5.5 Composition of the Storting following the 2001 election, per seats



Source: Aalberg (2002).

The election results led to an unprecedented situation in Norway's political landscape: the Labour Party suffered major losses, getting its lowest electoral score since 1924 (43 seats, -22 compared to 1997), and the former centrist coalition (KrF, Sp and V) was also discredited, leading former Prime Minister Bondevik to declare this alliance dead on the night of the election. The two winners of this election were the Conservative Party, gaining a total of 38 seats (+15), and the Socialist Left Party, gaining 23 seats (+14). Following speculations on a one-party Conservative government, this new situation led to the creation of a new type of minority centrist coalition government, Bondevik II and nicknamed 'co-operation government', consisting of the Christian Democrats, the Conservatives and the Liberals, with the support of the Progress Party in the opposition (Aalberg 2002). Thus, the main difference with Bondevik I was that the anti-EU Centre Party was replaced by the pro-EU Conservative Party. As a result, the government was composed of parties having different positions over the *membership* issue. In order to avoid a scenario as known in 1990 with the Syse government, the Sem Declaration setting up the 2001-2005 government programme stated that "Norway's affiliation with the EU builds on the EEA agreement. The EEA agreement must be effectively exploited and be adapted in accordance with the new needs" (quoted and translated in Fossum 2010: 78). This effectively corresponded to a 'suicide clause' over the EU membership issue, as it could have threatened the stability of the government due to the importance of this matter

to the Conservatives. Indeed, “[f]or the Conservatives, application for EU membership is more important than cabinet office” (Aalberg 2002: 1049). This clause thus aimed at avoiding a potential government’s resignation over this issue. The Sem Declaration also clarified the government’s position in other EU policy areas, which did not differ from the former parliamentary term. Accordingly, the government advocated close co-operation with the European institutions in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice through the Schengen agreement, and close contacts on the developments of the CFSP.

No major issues related to Norway’s relationship with the European Union were raised during the first years of Bondevik II. Two reasons can be invoked in order to explain this: the fact that the Sem Declaration was seen as a compromise to ensure the government’s stability, and the lack of developments at the European level to deepen Norway’s integration due to the introduction of the Euro and preparations for the 2004 ‘big bang enlargement’. Nevertheless, at the end of 2004, the agreement on the concept of EU Battle Groups became highly politicised at the national level and led to parliamentary discussions following a demand from the opposition (Sjursen 2012). On this matter, Norwegian Defence Minister Kristin Krohn Devold (Conservative), known for her pro-NATO policies, stated that it would be in Norway’s interest to participate in the European defence policy through “association to the EU Battle Group concept”, because of “a progression in the defence and security policy co-operation in the EU which puts all doubt aside with regard to the realisation of EU ambitions” (quoted in Græger 2005: 95). This was a turning point in the government’s attitude towards European integration (and more especially on participation in the CFSP), as NATO had always been considered as the cornerstone in terms of foreign and security policy. All parties in the ‘co-operation government’ shared this position. In the Storting, the two anti-integrationist parties, the Centre and the Socialist Left, were strongly opposed to participation in such policy. There were also signs of reluctance amongst members of the Labour and Progress parties. Following negotiations with the European institutions, the majority of the parties represented in the Storting decided to follow the government’s position. Unlike other major EU-related issues such as the EEA, the application for EU membership and participation in the Schengen area, no parliamentary vote was held on the ratification of the EUBG concept (Sjursen 2012). Most parties considered that participation in this policy did not constitute a challenge to the Norwegian Constitution and national sovereignty. Furthermore, contributing to such Battle Groups corresponded to the ruling

parties' visions on co-operation in terms of foreign and security policy, despite this decision coming as a surprise to some observers (Græger 2005). The *Memorandum [...] concerning the principles for the establishment and operation of a multinational battle group to be made available to the European Union* was then ratified on 17 May 2005.

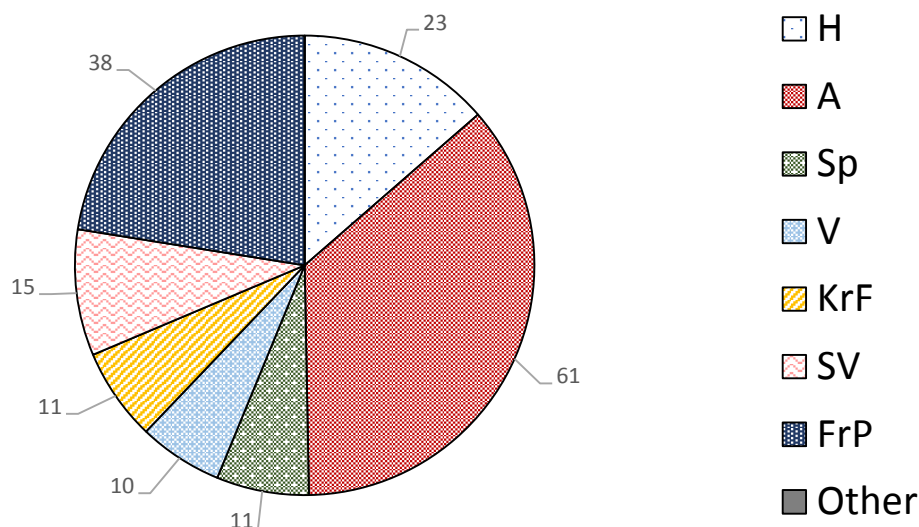
5.3.7. Stoltenberg II (17 October 2005 – 16 October 2013)

5.3.7.1. First mandate (2005 – 2009)

A new general election was held on 12 September 2005. Observers determined that an 'informal' election campaign had started in the wake of the 2001 election (Aalberg and Brekken 2006). This is due to three main reasons. First, the Labour Party had experienced its worst result for almost eighty years, and was eager to come back to power. Second, the Centre Party was relegated to the opposition following the end of the 'centrist coalition' as claimed by Bondevik. Finally, the Socialist Left Party, who experienced its best results ever in 2001, wanted to improve its political influence throughout the parliamentary term. In addition, reports mentioned that the Labour Party was considering coming back to power within a majority coalition with the two aforementioned parties in a large 'red-green' alliance, in order to improve government stability (ibid.). Such a coalition did not have any precedents in Norway, and uncertainties over its position on the issue of European integration could be raised, as both the Socialist Left and the Centre parties were strongly opposed to any forms of formal integration, unlike the Labour Party.

The main themes raised during the 'formal' election campaign were similar to the ones raised in 2001: education, taxes and pensions. The EU issue remained non-salient, despite the recent implementation of the EU Battle Group. Nevertheless, the spectrum of the Syse coalition was still present to the extent that any coalition involving the Conservatives and the Centre Party could not be considered (Fossum 2010).

Figure 5.6 Composition of the Storting following the 2005 elections, per seats



Source: Aalberg and Brekken (2006).

Two parties won this general election: the Labour Party, gaining a total of 61 seats (+18 compared to 2001), and the Progress Party with 38 seats (+12). The Liberal Party (+8) was the only ruling party to gain seats in this election, whereas the Conservative Party (-15) and the Christian Democratic Party (-11) made significant losses. Finally, the Socialist Left Party lost 8 seats. As leader of the largest party represented in the Storting, Jens Stoltenberg took the initiative to create a majority left-wing coalition government with Sp and SV, contrasting with the former single party minority Labour governments which predominated throughout the period analysed.

As previously mentioned, the parties' positions on European integration diverged. In order to bring stability as it was the case for the Bondevik II coalition, the Soria Moria Declaration, constituting the basis for the Stoltenberg II government, stated that the coalition would *not* apply for a Norwegian EU membership, while previous post-1994 government programmes avoided mentioning this issue. Nevertheless, and despite Sp and SV's stance on European co-operation, the Declaration also mentioned that Stoltenberg II will "pursue a more active European policy (implicitly criticizing its predecessor for passivity). The Declaration likewise noted that the government should ensure open debate on EEA and EU issues, including greater parliamentary [...] involvement" (Fossum 2010: 79). In other words, whereas the government adopted a negative stance on the

membership issue, the Declaration stated the importance for Norway to play a dynamic role in European co-operation, mostly through the EEA and other existing agreements. As such, the Labour Party's position mostly shaped the content of the government programme in terms of European integration, while the anti-integration preferences of the Centre and Socialist Left parties did not prevail, most likely because of their weak amount of parliamentary seats. It can thus be interpreted that the composition of the government mostly affected the government's position on European integration, due to the strong political weight of the Labour Party (61 seats) compared to its coalition partners (26 seats).

During this mandate, few issues related to European co-operation were raised in the Storting. However, Norway's participation in the Nordic Battle Group for the first semester of 2008 led to parliamentary debates but also to internal divisions within the government. Indeed, while such policy was not mentioned in the government programme, it was planned that the NBG would be ready to be deployed for this period. Within the government, the Labour Party strongly supported participation in such policy, as stated by Labour Defence Minister Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen: "[t]hese forces have also become a central part of Nordic security and defence co-operation, and are thus well-suited for further developing this collaboration and adapting it to new needs. In this connection, our contribution is important because it means involving Norwegian defence in practical co-operation with our Nordic neighbours" (quoted and translated in Sjursen 2012: 11). In other words, Norwegian participation in the NBG was seen by the Labour Party as a mean to strengthen Nordic co-operation. Somewhat surprisingly, the anti-integrationist Centre Party shared this opinion:

We [the Centre Party, author's note] consider that the operational unit to which we now agree is based on international law. It should be based on a clear UN mandate. The Parliament must be consulted, and the Government should make the decision. In other words: an adequate process. I believe that this [participation in the Nordic Battle Group, author's note] follows the Nordic track, an active European policy, the NATO track and the UN-track and goes in the right direction (Samuelsen 2007).¹⁷³

As such, this switch in the Centre Party's position on participation in the NBG can be explained by its interpretation of this policy: it is based on international law. As such, this policy does not contradict the main party stance on European co-operation. Nevertheless, Sp's 2005 manifesto opposed participation in the NBG, which thus contradicted its stance as coalition member. As far as the Socialist Left Party is concerned, its representatives showed signs of reluctance towards Norway's participation in this policy: "[...] the last time we debated on this issue in the previous parliamentary term, SV expressed scepticism to join the Nordic Battle Group under the EU. We are not part of the EU, so why did sneak in and get a foot in the door?" (Jacobsen 2007).¹⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the party welcomed positive developments regarding Norway's participation in peacekeeping operations, and did not openly oppose the country's contribution in the NBG. Unlike in Finland and Sweden, participation in the NBG was not subject to a parliamentary vote.

5.3.7.2. Second mandate (2009 – 2013)

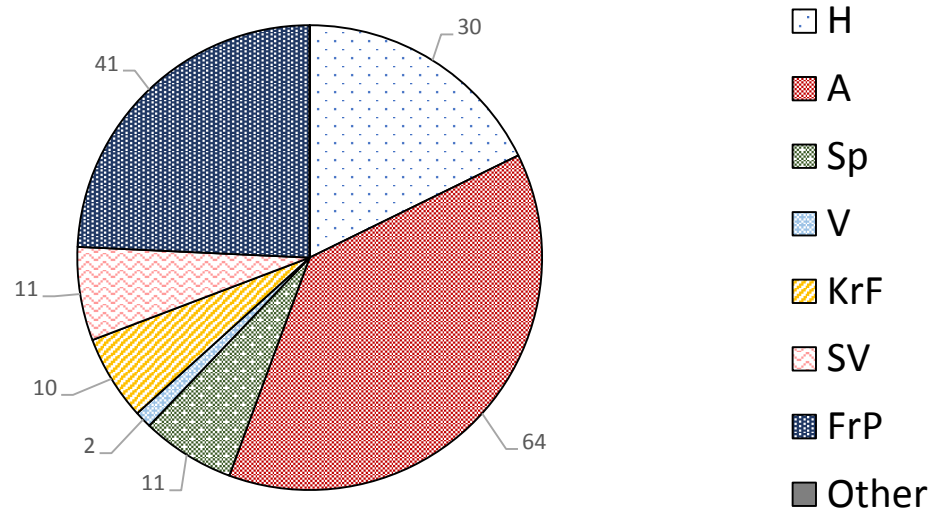
Following a campaign in which the global financial crisis and government alternatives constituted key issues, a new general election was held on 14 September 2009. This election was considered as an extremely close race where two blocs campaigned against each other: on the one hand, the existing red-green coalition was renewed and the three parties decided to campaign on a broad common platform; on the other, the four centre-right opposition parties, through the impulsion of Conservative Party Leader Erna Solberg, wanted to promote a government alternative, but the reluctance of both Christian

¹⁷³ Author's translation: "Den operative enheten som vi nå er enige om, oppfatter jeg dit hen at dens aktivitet er basert på folkeretten. Den skal være basert på et klart FN-mandat. Stortinget skal konsulteres, og Regjeringen skal ta en beslutning. Med andre ord: en betryggende prosess. Jeg føler at dette er å følge det nordiske sporet, en aktiv europapolitikk, NATO-sporet og FN-sporet videre i en positiv retning".

¹⁷⁴ Author's translation: "Viss representantane hugsar sist vi hadde debatt om dette i førre stortingsperiode, blei det uttrykt skepsis frå oss i SV om å delta i Nordic Battle Group under EU. Vi er jo ikkje med i EU, så korfor skal vi snike oss med og få ein fot innanfor?".

Democratic and Liberal parties to include the populist right Progress Party affected the credibility of such alternative (Aalberg 2010; Allern 2010).

Figure 5.7 Composition of the Storting following the 2009 election, per seats



Source: Aalberg (2010).

Broadly speaking, the 2009 election results led to a situation similar to the Swedish 2006 general election (discussed in section 4.3.5.1). The Stoltenberg II coalition eventually kept a slight majority of parliamentary seats with 86 seats out of 165 (-1 compared to 2005), despite substantial gains made by the Conservative Party (30 seats, +7) and the Progress Party (+3). The Liberal Party suffered major losses (2 seats, -8), while the Christian Democratic Party remained quite stable, losing one seat (10).

As a result, the Stoltenberg II government was renewed and formally appointed on 20 October 2009. As mentioned by Aalberg (2010: 1115), “[n]ot since the election in 1969 has a Norwegian majority cabinet been re-elected”. Ministerial posts were reallocated according to the election results: the Labour Party got 12 ministries (+2 compared to the previous mandate), the Socialist Left Party 4 (-1) and the Centre Party retained its 4 ministries. Overall, these changes did not affect the government’s ideology, which remained leftist (-29.98 on Kim and Fording’s index of government partisanship). The coalition agreement, known as the Soria Moria II Declaration, was relatively similar to the

one adopted four years earlier. On the issue of European integration, the Declaration stated, e.g., that the government would *not* apply for an EU membership, but would conduct an active European policy; appoint a public research-based committee to evaluate the EEA agreement and raise awareness with regards to its implications on the Norwegian society;¹⁷⁵ and build further on the Schengen co-operation (Government of Norway 2010).

As mentioned in the two previous empirical chapters, the states participating in the Nordic Battle Group were expected to place their troops in high readiness during the first semester of 2011. Even though this policy was not implicitly mentioned in the Soria Moria II Declaration, it stated that the Stoltenberg II government would “strengthen [...] Nordic co-operation where foreign policy and security policy are concerned” (ibid.) as well as continue collaboration with the European Union in the area of defence and security policy. Within this context, Norway’s participation in the NBG was not debated in the Storting as it was the case in 2007: instead, the issue was only briefly mentioned when MPs voted on the state’s budget for the year 2011 on 5 October 2010. As such, there is no data available on the parties’ positions on participation in the NBG for the first semester of 2011. Nevertheless, it seems conceivable to stress that the situation did not differ from 2007.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the complexity of Norway’s relationship with the European Union and once again showed the relevance of analysing parties’ and governments’ positions through the perspective of differentiated integration. Indeed, besides the traditional membership/non-membership dichotomy, the main political actors have had different views on European co-operation depending on policy areas. Accordingly, parties opposed to joining the EU can be in favour of participation in the EEA (e.g. the Christian Democratic Party and the Progress Party), while others can be opposed to such involvement (e.g. the Socialist Left Party and the Centre Party). This

¹⁷⁵ Such evaluation was published in 2012 and is commonly referred to as the “911 report”, as it consists of 911 pages. See Norges offentlige utredninger (2012).

final section highlights the main conclusions that can be drawn from Norway's empirical analysis.

First, in a country with a strong tradition of minority governments, *the composition of parliament affected government positions on European integration*, which would confirm the first hypothesis explored in this study. Indeed, as demonstrated throughout section 5.3, governments were in favour of deepening Norway's relationship with the European Union at times when the Storting was composed of a majority of pro-integrationist political parties. Conversely, *a government that was not sure of having enough parliamentary support over a splitting EU-related issue would shape its position accordingly*. This has been demonstrated on two occasions: under Bondevik I, when the coalition government was mostly opposed to the Schengen agreement but acknowledged that a majority of MPs voted in favour during the previous parliamentary term; and under Stoltenberg I, when tentative attempts were made by some ministers to reactivate the membership issue. Accordingly, the role of parliament in shaping government positions on European integration cannot be underestimated.

Second, in most cases, *the composition of government affected its position on European integration* (as stated in hypothesis 2), *while the type of cabinet did not seem to play a role* (in contrast to hypotheses 3 and 4). Throughout the period analysed, Norway experienced three different types of government: minority one-party government; minority coalition government; and majority coalition government. Under the three Labour-led single party minority governments, the European policies mostly reflected the official party's attitudes towards European integration: pro-membership (Brundtland III and IV) and, following the outcome of the 1994 referendum, pro-integration through existing agreements and negotiations over closer co-operation in the field of foreign and security policy (Jagland and Stoltenberg I). The three minority coalition governments (Syse, Bondevik I and II), as well as the only majority coalition government (Stoltenberg II), took somewhat milder positions towards European integration, due to strong opposing views between parties within the coalitions. In those cases, either the government opted for a status quo, basing Norway's relationship with the EU on existing agreements (Bondevik II and Stoltenberg II), or the prevailing pro-integrationist position within the coalition was retained (Syse). The Bondevik I government constitutes a noteworthy exception: while all three parties in

the coalition were initially against participating in the Schengen area, the Christian Democrats and the Liberals switched their position and voted in favour of this agreement.

Third, it appears that *the government's ideology in Norway did not play a role in influencing its stance on European co-operation*. Between 1990 and 2010, it has been demonstrated that government ideology varied from being centrist (Bondevik I and II) to leftist, even for the Syse coalition which was exclusively composed of centre-right parties. In contrast to hypothesis 5 (i.e. *government support for European integration will decline as government move further to either left of right*), governments with a strong leftist value on Kim and Fording's index of partisanship still advocated closer co-operation with the European Union. The most striking example is Brundtland III's decision to apply for EU membership. As such, non-centrist governments were still supportive of European integration, even following the electorate's decision to reject membership in 1994.

In order to determine the validity of the hypotheses explored in this study, the following chapter will now offer a comparative analysis of the three selected Nordic states.

Chapter 6. Comparative analysis

Party and government support for European co-operation does indeed differ between the Nordic states. While a broad majority of the Finnish political elites have supported most developments at the European level as well as a full Finnish participation in all EU policies, the Swedish experience has rather diverged with its strong tradition of ‘federal-scepticism’ and with an equally strong reluctance to participate in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union. In Norway, conversely, the electorate’s ‘No’ to EU membership and the absence of a broad pro-European consensus amongst elites led to contrasting positions taken up by governments, which have mostly defended the current status quo as an ‘inner outsider’.

It should be borne in mind that certain contextual factors, which have been outlined in each empirical chapter, have also played important roles in shaping such. Yet, it has been demonstrated that the *domestic* political variables analysed in this study should not be downplayed. Indeed, the composition of parliament, the composition of government and, to a lesser extent, of the type of government have all played a role in explaining why governments have supported further integration or differentiation. Government ideology, however, did not seem to influence such positions.

With regards to the aforementioned domestic variables, the main objective of this chapter is to offer a brief comparative analysis of the findings from the empirical chapters. In addition to assessing the relevance of these variables (across countries and policy areas), this summary will pave the way for the more general conclusions of the thesis.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first consists of an analysis of party positions on European integration, divided by party family. The second section highlights the comparative elements of government positions on European integration per policy area. And finally, the third section summarises these comparative findings in relation to the hypotheses this study has put forward.

6.1. Comparative analysis of party positions on Europe

In Chapter 1, it was established that party systems in the Nordic states are relatively similar, with seven to eight well-established party families in place since the early 1990s (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 List of well-established political parties in Finland, Sweden and Norway, per party family

	Finland	Sweden	Norway
Conservative	National Coalition Party (<i>KOK</i>)	Moderate Party (<i>M</i>)	Conservative party (<i>H</i>)
Social Democratic	Social Democratic Party (<i>SDP</i>)	Social Democratic Party (<i>SAP</i>)	Labour Party (<i>A</i>)
Agrarian	Centre Party (<i>KESK</i>)	Centre Party (<i>C</i>)	Centre Party (<i>Sp</i>)
Christian Democratic	Christian Democrats (<i>KD</i>)	Christian Democrats (<i>KDS</i>)	Christian Democratic Party (<i>KrF</i>)
Liberal	Swedish People's Party (<i>RKP</i>)	Liberal People's Party (<i>FpL</i>)	Liberal Party (<i>V</i>)
Socialist Left	Left Alliance (<i>VAS</i>)	Left Party (<i>Vp</i>)	Socialist Left Party (<i>SV</i>)
Green	Green League (<i>VIHR</i>)	Green Party (<i>MdG</i>)	N/A
Populist Right	Finns Party (<i>PS</i>)	N/A	Progress Party (<i>Fp</i>)

Despite these similarities, one important difference can be drawn between Finland, and Sweden and Norway – the relevance of *bloc politics*. For the latter two, political ideology has historically played a role in shaping government coalitions, while in Finland it has been marked by so-called ‘rainbow governments’ consisting of parties from the left and the right of the political spectrum.

The three empirical chapters have also demonstrated that with the exception of the conservative party family, parties’ belonging or connection to a specific party family does *not* appear to influence their positions on Europe. As a result, it seems that parties shape their attitudes towards integration depending on the domestic political context, and do not share a common Nordic position on European co-operation as such. In other words, assumptions according to which Nordic co-operation between ideologically similar parties have come to affect their views on Europe can thus be ruled out.

This section will briefly compare party positions on European co-operation in Finland, Sweden and Norway. As such, it will be shown that even though the Nordic party systems are described as relatively similar in the literature, their experience in terms of party attitudes towards European integration has diverged. As these have then had a direct influence on subsequent governments' programmes, it is thus relevant to establish parties' views on Europe.

Conservative parties

In all three cases, conservative parties share similar positions in terms of support for further European integration; they strongly support full membership and believe that their respective country should belong to the 'inner core' of the European Union. As such, differentiated integration is not seen as an option or as viable alternative. This position is also shared by a majority of the party members and by the MPs. Unlike the other party families, the 'EU issue' does not lead to strong internal divisions. As a whole, the conservative parties can be considered as the only pro-European party family in Finland, Sweden and Norway.¹⁷⁶

Social Democratic parties

In contrast to their conservative peers, the social democrats do not share any similar views on European co-operation. In Finland, e.g., membership and further integration – in *all* policy areas – have been perceived to be largely positive, amongst the party elites as well as amongst the grass-roots. The only signs of reluctance were related to developments of a strong European foreign and security policy. Yet, the Finnish SDP has not advocated for differentiated integration to apply to Finland. In Sweden and Norway, however, the situation is different. Both parties have suffered from strong internal divisions over the European 'issue', especially regarding the question of membership and Sweden's participation in the third stage of the EMU. Signs of Euroscepticism are perceptible on several levels; amongst the members, the elites, the MPs and amongst the appointed ministers. As a consequence but in contrast to Finland, reaching a strong consensus on

¹⁷⁶ However, these findings do not apply to all Nordic countries: in Iceland, the conservative Independence Party (*Sjálfstæðisflokkurinn*) is strongly opposed to EU membership but supports the EEA agreement.

Europe within these two parties is and has been challenging. Due to the political weight of the social democratic parties in these countries, such divisions have had an impact on their respective country's relationship with the European Union.

Agrarian parties

Like the social democratic party family, the Nordic Centre parties have also been divided and do not share a common position on Europe. In Norway, Sp is strongly opposed to any kind of institutionalised relations with Brussels. However, in Finland and Sweden, these parties suffered from significant internal divisions on the issue. Furthermore, their leaderships have often promoted differentiated integration by advocating membership but rejecting participation in some highly politicised policy areas, especially the EMU and developments in the CFSP.

Christian Democratic parties

The three Christian Democratic parties also diverge in their views on Europe, even though they do not suffer from any similar types of internal tensions. In Finland, alongside the Finns Party, KD is considered to be the most well-established party that opposes participation in several policy areas, but without rejecting membership per se. The party is particularly critical of participation in the EMU and in the CFSP. In Sweden, however, KDS campaigned in favour of membership in the early 1990s and has supported full participation in all policy areas since 2000. Finally, the Norwegian KrF has adopted a much more pragmatic position. The party has always opposed membership but at the same time advocated for close co-operation with Brussels on several areas where interdependence prevails, such as justice and peacekeeping operations. As such, KrF wants Norway to belong to the 'inner periphery' of the Union, thus defending the current situation. These three parties thus differ remarkably regarding their support for European co-operation.

Liberal parties

Regardless of having a historical link to pro-European, conservative parties, the Nordic liberal party family does not share a common position on Europe. While the Liberal People's Party of Sweden, together with the Swedish People's Party of Finland, are strongly pro-integrationist, this is not the case for their Norwegian counterpart, who has conversely advocated for a closer relationship with the Union in interdependent policy areas while still remaining in its 'inner periphery'.

Socialist Left parties

As successors from the former communist parties, the socialist left parties of the three countries have generally tended to be opposed to European integration and were also strongly opposed to joining the European Union. However, when it comes to support for co-operation per policy area, their views tend to differ. The Swedish Vp and the Norwegian SV have generally been the most critical and almost unanimously rejected any kind of institutionalised co-operation, which is mostly seen as a neoliberal tool. In Finland, however, VAS has adopted a more nuanced attitude. In the early 1990s, e.g., the party failed in adopting a common position on EU membership, which demonstrates the strong internal divisions on this issue. Subsequently, the party came to change its stance towards European integration and became much more positive. It even supported EMU membership in order to remain in the Lipponen rainbow cabinet, despite significant internal oppositions. In subsequent years, VAS has remained opposed to participation in the CFSP. In short, while the Swedish and Norwegian socialist left parties can be considered as anti-integrationist parties, the Finnish one has changed its attitude over time.

Green parties

The Green parties across the region have also been divided on this issue. In Finland, VIHR shared a similar position as the Socialist Left VAS until the early 2000s, and they presented no official stance on membership when the debate surfaced in the early 1990s. They were initially opposed to an EMU membership, before changing their stance in

order to stay in government; and they also opposed developments relating to the CFSP. However, from 2003 onwards, the party has started to become more pro-integrationist, and has supported co-operation in most policy areas. In Sweden, MdG was and to some extent continues to be largely opposed to European co-operation. The party opposed membership from the early 1990s onwards and until 2008 when it removed the withdrawal clause from its party manifesto. It also opposed most developments at the European level (including participation in the third stage of the EMU), but has increasingly come to accept Sweden's EU membership. The Norwegian Green Party (*Miljøpartiet de Grøne*), founded in 1988, gained its very first parliamentary seat following the 2013 general election: it is thus not included in this analysis.

Populist Right parties

The views of the two well-established populist right parties in the region also differ. In Norway, the Progress Party is the only party to not have adopted an official position on membership, but has supported co-operation through the EEA agreement. FrP subsequently advocated a close co-operation with the Union in policies where interdependence would prevail. The Finns Party has been more critical. The party (and more specifically its predecessor, the Rural Party) was opposed to membership, but subsequently came to accept the referendum decision to join and did not call for withdrawing from the Union. However, PS was strongly opposed to developments in the CFSP, the AFSJ and participation in the EMU. As far as Sweden is concerned, the Sweden Democrats gained its 20 first parliamentary seats following the 2010 elections, while New Democracy (25 seats in 1991) was dissolved in 2000. These two parties are thus not included within the framework of this study.

6.2. Comparative analysis of government positions on Europe

Based on the findings outlined in the three empirical chapters (Chapters 3, 4 and 5), Table 6.2 offers a summary of government positions regarding European integration. Instead of focusing on the specific AFSJ and CFSP policies outlined in the preceding chapters (i.e. participation in the Schengen area, and participation in the European Union Battle

Groups, which were only salient for a limited time), this table instead summarises government positions per main *policy areas* selected within the framework of this analysis (see section 2.2). Based on an in-depth analysis of government programmes, this comparative summary uses a scale similar to the one used when assessing party positions on Europe (see section 2.4). As such:

- ++ means that the government as a whole is in favour of integration in this policy area;
- + means that the government's official position is in favour of integration in this policy area, but that there are some divisions amongst ministers;
- 0 means that the government does not have an official position on this policy area, or remains neutral on this issue;
- - means that the government's official position is against integration in this policy area (thus promoting differentiated integration), but that there are some divisions amongst ministers;
- -- means that that the government as a whole is against integration in this policy area (thus promoting differentiated integration);
- N/A means that a policy area or issue was not politically salient at that time.

Table 6.2 Summary of government positions on European integration in Finland, Sweden and Norway, per policy area

	Composition	Position on the left/right scale	Type of government	EEA	EU	JHA	CFSP	EMU
<i>Finland</i>								
Aho I (1991-1994)	KESK, KOK, RKP, KD	-1.59	Surplus majority	++	+	+	+	N/A
Aho II (1994-1995)	KESK, KOK, RKP	-2	Majority	++	++	++	+	N/A
Lipponen, first mandate (1995- 1999)	SDP, KOK, RKP, VAS, VIHR	-3.22	Surplus majority	N/A	++	++	+	+
Lipponen, second mandate (1999-2003)	SDP, KOK, RKP, VAS, VIHR	6.38	Surplus majority	N/A	++	++	+	++
Jääteemäki / Vanhanen I (2003-2007)	KESK, SDP, RKP	-1.23	Surplus majority	N/A	++	++	+	++
Vanhanen II / Kiviniemi (2007-2011)	KESK, KOK, RKP, VIHR	-25.3	Surplus majority	N/A	++	++	+	++
<i>Sweden</i>								
Carlsson II (1990-1991)	SAP	-23.9	Single minority	+	+	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bildt (1991-1994)	M, C, Fp, KDS	19.9	Minority	++	++	++	+	N/A
Carlsson III (1994-1996)	SAP	23.8	Single minority	++	+	+	+	N/A
Persson, first mandate (1996-1998)	SAP	23.8	Single minority	N/A	++	++	++	-
Persson, second mandate (1998-2002)	SAP	-3.5	Single minority	N/A	++	++	++	0
Persson, third mandate (2002-2006)	SAP	-18.3	Single minority	N/A	++	++	++	+
Reinfeldt, first mandate (2006-2010)	M, C, Fp, KDS	3.95	Majority	N/A	++	++	++	0
Reinfeldt, second mandate (2010-2014)	M, C, Fp, KDS	1.2	Minority	N/A	++	++	++	0
<i>Norway</i>								
Syse (1989-1990)	H, KrF, Sp	-14.23	Minority	+	0	0	0	N/A
Brundtland III (1990-1993)	A	-36	Single minority	++	+	+	+	N/A
Brundtland IV / Jagland (1993-1997)	A	-19.7	Single minority	++	+	+	+	N/A
Bondevik I (1997-2000)	KrF, Sp, V	-7.14	Minority	+	0	+	+	N/A
Stoltenberg I (2000-2001)	A	-18.1	Single minority	++	0	+	+	N/A
Bondevik II (2001-2005)	H, KrF, V	-3.16	Minority	++	0	+	+	N/A
Stoltenberg II, first mandate (2005-2009)	A, SV, Sp	-31.23	Majority	+	-	+	+	N/A
Stoltenberg II, second mandate (2009-2013)	A, SV, Sp	-29.98	Majority	+	-	+	+	N/A

Three main findings can be derived from the data presented in Table 6.2. First, it appears that in Finland, Sweden and Norway, no government has been fully opposed to participation in any of the policy areas outlined above. This is mostly due to the participation of pro-integrationist parties in coalitions and/or due to intra-party divisions over the European issue. Second, throughout the period analysed, only two governments have officially opposed a form of European co-operation – the Persson government opposed a Swedish EMU membership in 1997, and the Stoltenberg II government officially stated that Norway would not apply for an EU membership between 2005 and 2013. Finally, and as hinted at in each of the three empirical chapters, this table shows divergences between the three countries with regards to government partisanship and the type of government in place. Finland has a strong tradition of surplus majority governments, which has a direct impact on partisanship. Apart from the Vanhanen II / Kiviniemi government, all cabinets can be considered to be centrist-type governments. Sweden, however, experienced more variation. In Norway, most cabinets were left-oriented, notwithstanding their type.

In order to offer a detailed analysis regarding each domestic variable analysed in this study, this section compares governments' positions for each selected policy area and is thus divided into five sub-sections.

6.2.1. Participation in the European Economic Area

As a general rule, Nordic governments *have mostly been supportive of participation in the European Economic Area and could rely on a strong parliamentary majority in favour of such agreement*. In other words and regarding the first hypothesis, the relative strength of pro-EEA parties in parliaments appeared to shape the governments' positions on this policy. In Finland and Sweden, both governments warmly welcomed the EEA agreement, highlighting the benefits of deeper economic integration and more importantly participation in the Single Market.¹⁷⁷ Yet, in Norway, the EEA led to strong internal divisions within the Syse coalition, which eventually led to its resignation as the anti-EEA Centre Party had strongly opposed such an agreement. The subsequent single party minority government led by the

¹⁷⁷ Even though, in the case of Sweden, it quickly appeared that the EEA agreement was seen as too limited.

pro-European Labour Party, Brundtland III, supported the EEA government and thus followed its Finnish and Swedish peers.

Once Sweden and Finland joined the European Union, the issue of participation in the EEA became obsolete, while it remained topical in Norway. Through the years, Norwegian governments saw EEA membership as the basis for the relationship between Norway and the European Union. On some occasions, however, governments have expressed some reservations and called for an evaluation of the existing agreement. This was the case for the Bondevik I and Stoltenberg II cabinets. These stances were mostly explained by the participation of parties opposed to the EEA in these governments; nevertheless, due to the relative strength of pro-EEA parties in these coalitions, the governments' positions were mostly positive and did not jeopardise Norway's participation in the economic area. As a consequence, the Norwegian governments' positions on the EEA would confirm hypothesis 2, according to which *a pro-integration government position is taken if the cabinet is composed of a majority of pro-integrationist parties*. With regards to the collapse of the Syse government, conclusions go even beyond this hypothesis, as the government resigned due to divergences on the EEA.

The third variable explored in this analysis, i.e. the type of government, does not appear to have affected government positions on this policy area, due to the prominence of pro-EEA parties in each Nordic parliament. Finally, as indicated in Table 6.2, government partisanship does not seem to have had an impact on government position on participation in the EEA in either of the three countries studied. Indeed, left-wing, centrist and right-wing governments have all supported national involvement in this policy area. In sum, the fourth hypothesis does not apply in this case.

6.2.2. European Union membership

In order to offer a comprehensive comparative analysis, government positions on European Union membership should be divided into two periods: the first one covers the early 1990s when Sweden, followed by Finland and Norway, applied to join the EU. The second period focuses on the post-1995 years, following Finland's and Sweden's accession, and the Norwegian electorate's decision to vote 'No' in the referendum.

In the early 1990s, the first Nordic application for EU membership came from Sweden. As previously demonstrated, such decision was mostly driven by economic incentives, but the domestic political situation (i.e. the composition of the Riksdag as well as the Social Democratic Party's electoral strategies) also facilitated this process. Finland and then Norway followed Sweden's example a few months later. It is interesting to note that in the three countries, governments were internally divided on the issue of membership when the applications were submitted; yet, *they could all rely on a pro-European majority in their respective parliaments*, thus confirming the first hypothesis. With regards to the second hypothesis (on the composition of government), divisions within coalition parties or internal conflict amongst party elites does not seem to have affected government positions in favour of membership. Instead, *the majority position (and, within parties, the position advocated by the party leader) was respected and did not threaten the raison d'être of the government* (unlike the Syse cabinet's experience in Norway). On the other hand, the *type* of government does not seem to have affected these positions, as there is no variation depending on whether the government accounts for more or less than 50 per cent of MPs. Finally, government ideology does also not appear to have influenced government decisions to apply for an EU membership, as confirmed by Kim and Fording's index of government partisanship: the Finnish centrist (Aho I), the Swedish left-wing and right-wing (Carlsson II and Bildt) as well as the Norwegian left-wing (Brundtland III) cabinets all supported EU membership.

In subsequent years and following Finland and Sweden's accession to the European Union, membership became a *fait accompli* for the political elites in these countries. Besides the Swedish Green¹⁷⁸ and Left parties, all well-established parties represented in their respective national parliaments as well as subsequent governments fully supported membership. As such, the issue of 'membership' lost in saliency from 1995 onwards. In Norway, the situation was different: following the 1994 referendum, most political parties (especially the Labour Party) adapted their position on European integration and, as a consequence, the weak Storting majority, which was in favour of applying for membership in the early 1990s, disappeared. Subsequent governments decided either to leave this issue off the table, or to openly reject an application in their programmes. This finding goes in the direction of hypothesis 1: *parliaments composed primarily of parties opposing EU membership*

¹⁷⁸ Until 2008, when the Swedish Green Party removed withdrawal from the Union from the manifesto.

influenced government positions on this issue. Nevertheless, membership was still raised by the pro-European Conservative Party in subsequent years. This became problematic when the party was included in the Bondevik II coalition. This particular case constitutes the exception to hypothesis 2 (on the composition of government): even though the government was composed of a majority of Conservative ministers, the coalition agreement introduced a ‘suicide clause’ on this issue. As such, the majority position in the Storting prevailed on the majority position in the government.

Another interesting finding in the Norwegian case relates to the governments’ positions and how the type of government in place also matters. In both mandates, the majority Stoltenberg II cabinet openly stated that it would not seek an EU membership, while the post-1995 minority governments (i.e. Bondevik I and II as well as Stoltenberg I) avoided mentioning the issue all together. This goes in the direction of hypothesis 4, according to which a majority government is expected to take stronger positions on European integration.

With regards to the impact of ideology on government positions, it appears difficult to draw any clear conclusions that would support hypothesis 5. While the Stoltenberg II cabinet was more left-oriented than its predecessors (see values calculated on the partisanship index), there was no government support (even amongst the centrist cabinets) for submitting an application following the 1994 referendum. As a consequence, it seems that government ideology does not affect support for integration.

6.2.3. Participation in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice

Participation in the AFSJ, conversely, became politically salient primarily in the mid-1990s, when discussions over Schengen membership were raised by the five Nordic governments. As demonstrated earlier, participation in the Schengen area was mostly seen as a mean to ensure the future of Nordic co-operation, which dates back from the introduction of the Nordic Passport Union in 1958. As such, there was little opposition to such participation in the three countries analysed. Parties that were opposed to Schengen membership were, in a broader sense, opposed to any kind of institutionalised

European co-operation.¹⁷⁹ This demonstrates the broad consensus on such co-operation amongst the Nordic political elites, notwithstanding certain contextual factors. As a result, it can be expected that *the composition of both parliament and government influenced government positions on participation in Schengen*.

Again, the Norwegian experience is interesting to highlight. Indeed, unlike in Sweden, both of the anti-integrationist parties were included in four coalition governments (i.e. the Centre Party in Syse and Bondevik I; and in both of the two Stoltenberg II mandates). While the issue was not salient under Syse, participation in Schengen was discussed under the Bondevik I government, and led to strong opposition from Sp, whose MPs voted against this policy in the Storting. Yet, this position did not threaten the party's participation in the government or the coalition itself, as it was tolerated by the Prime Minister and the opposition parties. In subsequent years, participation in Schengen was considered to be part of the Norwegian *acquis*, and even though both 'anti' parties came into power between 2005 and 2013, differentiated *disintegration* in the AFSJ remained off the table under the Stoltenberg II government, mostly due to the lack of any other anti-Schengen parties in parliament (confirming hypothesis 1), and the predominance of the Labour Party in this coalition (confirming hypothesis 2). As a result, the type of cabinet and government ideology does not seem to have affected positions on participation in Schengen (or in the AFSJ to a broader extent), even under the majority left-wing Stoltenberg II government.

6.2.4. Participation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy

In contrast to the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, the more politicised Common Foreign and Security Policy area has probably been the most debated issue in the three cases. Its centrality was due to Sweden and Finland's principle of non-alignment as well as Norway's ties with the United States through NATO. CFSP developments were mostly welcomed by Nordic governments from the mid-1990s onwards for three main reasons: the evolving context following the end of the Cold War; the need for a strong collective response in Europe meaning that neutrality was not seen as a viable option anymore; and

¹⁷⁹ As mentioned in Chapter 5, in Norway, the Christian Democratic (KrF) and Liberal (V) parties initially opposed joining Schengen in 1997, before switching their position on the 'Schengen II agreement' in 1999.

the fact that CFSP-related policies were not considered by the political elites to harm national sovereignty. Following accession to the European Union in 1995, and even though Swedish governments were strongly supportive of developments in the CFSP in terms of *deepening* integration, the Finnish ‘rainbow governments’ showed signs of reluctance, mostly due to reservations expressed by the Centre Party and the Left Alliance. In Norway, and even though belonging to the ‘inner periphery’ of the European Union, successive governments defended closer co-operation regarding foreign and security policy through bilateral agreements and participation in EU-led peacekeeping operations.

Within the framework of this thesis, the Nordic governments’ positions on the CFSP have been illustrated by participation in the European Union Battle Groups. Apart from the Battle Group 107 for Finland, the focus was mostly set on Finland’s, Sweden’s and Norway’s participations in the Nordic Battle Group in 2008 and 2011. In all three countries, contribution in these EUBGs was strongly supported by governments. In fact, and with regards to the variables explored in this study, the situation was relatively similar to the one surrounding participation in the Schengen area. First, *governments could rely on a majority of pro-CFSP parties in their respective parliaments*, thus confirming hypothesis 1. Second, even though some governments were composed of anti-integrationist or reluctant parties (e.g. KESK and VAS in Finland; C in Sweden; Sp and SV in Norway), *the majority stance in favour of participation in the EUBGs was retained and did not put the raison d’être of the cabinets at risk* (confirming hypothesis 2). Third, the type of government, however, did not appear to affect government positions on this issue, which would be in contrast to hypotheses 3 and 4. As a result, *the fact that a government is a minority or majority did not influence its position on participation in the CFSP*. Finally, both left-wing and centrist cabinets still supported national involvement in the EUBGs, meaning that in contrast to hypothesis 5, *governments’ support for participation in the CFSP did not decline as the ideological position moved away from the centre of the left-right political spectrum*.

6.2.5. Participation in the Economic and Monetary Union

Similar to EU membership debates, participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union (or participation in the Eurozone) is the policy that shows the most contrasting views between the cases studied. In Norway, the issue never became politically

salient due to the country's status as a non-member. The Finnish and Swedish governments adopted contrasting positions on this issue. In Finland, the Lipponen government decided, with the support of the Eduskunta, to join the Eurozone amongst the first wave of entrants in 1999; in contrast, the Swedish government initially decided to reject such membership in the late 1990s, but eventually put it to a referendum in 2003. Some of the domestic variables outlined previously would help explain these contrasting positions.

Regarding the composition of parliaments, the situation in both countries diverges. In Finland, due to the political weight of the Social Democratic and National Coalition parties, the Eduskunta was composed of a slight majority of pro-EMU parties. Such majority was then enhanced with the support of the two remaining parties in government, the Green League and the Left Alliance. In Sweden, however, there was a clear absence of a majority that was in favour of joining the EMU in the late 1990s, mostly due to strong internal divisions within the ruling Social Democratic Party. The situation changed following the 2002 general election and the switch in SAP and KDS' official stances on EMU in 2000. In sum, *the composition of parliament affected government position on participation in the EMU* (confirming hypothesis 1).

In addition, *the composition of the government also affected government positions on this issue* (confirming hypothesis 2). In fact, both VAS and VIHR had to adapt their own party's views on EMU membership in order to remain in the Lipponen coalition. In this particular case, it can thus be said that the government's majoritarian position came to shape smaller parties attitudes towards integration within the coalition. The Swedish case slightly differs: as a single party government, Persson's decision not to join the EMU as early as 1999 is partly explained by the absence of party cohesion on this issue. The decision to organise a referendum in 2003 was also the result of the SAP leadership's decision to officially support EMU membership.

Unlike the other policy areas examined in this thesis, *the type of government played at least a minor role in shaping its position on participation in the EMU* (relating to hypotheses 3 and 4). As a surplus majority coalition, the Lipponen government did not have to rely on external support within parliament; while in Sweden, the single party minority Persson government had to take into account the preferences of its parliamentary partners, especially those of the Centre Party in 1997 which were strongly opposed to an EMU membership. In the

2003 referendum, however, the type of government did not affect its position, as an agreement was reached with both its anti-EMU partners (MdG and Vp).

As far as government ideology is concerned, the findings do not correspond to the thesis' fifth hypothesis. In the Swedish case, and even though the strongly right-wing Persson government chose not to join the EMU in the late 1990s, the decision to organise a referendum in 2003 was taken under a left-wing cabinet. As such, the *government's 'non-centrist' ideology did not play a role in shaping EMU-related decisions.*

6.3. Comparative conclusions

In order to assess the relevance of the four selected Nordic variables on shaping government positions, this section will now briefly summarise the key comparative findings with regards to the five hypotheses.

H1: If there is a majority of pro-European integration parties in the parliament, then the government will be in favour of deepening the country's relationship with the European Union.

In all of the cases that have been analysed, it appears that the composition of parliament has played an important role in shaping government positions on participation in European policies. This finding is linked to the fact that all Nordic states adopted a parliamentary system of government. As a result, the majority parliamentary position on participation in European integration is reflected in their respective governments' stances. This finding demonstrates the strong influence that the Nordic parliaments are able to exert in shaping government preferences on Europe and, to a broader extent, also on their state's relationship with the European Union. Even though party positions on European integration differ from one country to the other, the governments tend to follow the majoritarian view in parliament, even if this contrasts with the majoritarian view in the government (e.g. the Bondevik I exception with regards to EU membership). H1 is thus confirmed.

H2: If there is a majority of pro-European integration parties in the government, then the government will be in favour of deepening the country's relationship with the European Union.

In all three of the cases analysed, governments can be composed of parties that do not necessarily share the same views on Europe, exemplified by how the majoritarian view in

parliament was always respected. As a consequence, this second hypothesis is largely confirmed, but there are two notable exceptions. First, the Syse government collapsed due to strong disagreements over the EEA issue in 1990. Second, Bondevik II was mostly composed of Conservative ministers who tended to be pro-EU membership, but the 'suicide clause' was introduced in the government's programme in order to avoid any instability within the coalition. Nevertheless, the 'government composition'-variable has generally played a role in shaping its stance on participation in European co-operation.

H3: A minority government will avoid putting the issue of European integration on top of its agenda.

H4: A majority government will conversely adopt a stronger position on European integration.

This analysis has demonstrated that the 'government type'-variable has played a partial role in shaping government positions on European integration. In contrast to hypothesis 3, several minority governments did in fact take strong stances on European-related issues, but with the support of their parliaments. In other words, a minority government would not avoid putting the issue of European integration on top of its agenda: rather, it would rely on the majoritarian position in parliament before taking up such a stance, as illustrated by Sweden and Norway's applications for membership (under Carlsson II and Brundtland III), and by Sweden's decision not to join the EMU in 1997 (under Persson). This confirms the strength of national parliaments in shaping government's positions on Europe (hypothesis 1) and dismisses H3. Majority governments, on the other hand, tend to take somewhat stronger stances on European co-operation, as illustrated by Lipponen's decision to join the EMU but without holding a referendum and, in Norway, by Stoltenberg II's negative stance on EU membership. This can be explained by the fact that they did not need to rely on external parliamentary support, as the government already accounted for more than half of MPs. H4 would thus be confirmed.

H5: Government's support for European integration will decline as it moves further to either the left or the right.

In a majority of the cases, government ideology has *not* shaped government's stances on European integration. Indeed, based on Kim and Fording's measure of government partisanship, it appears that leftist, centrist and rightist governments have adopted their positions independent of their respective ideologies. There are two cases where government ideology could have played a role. The first one is the Norwegian Stoltenberg

II cabinet (leftist, -31.23 and -29.98), which mentioned its opposition to EU membership. However, as both the anti-integrationist parties in Norway (i.e. the Socialist Left and the Centre) were coalition members, the most likely scenario is that the assumptions made in hypothesis 2 prevails. The second one is the Swedish Persson cabinet's decision not to participate in the third stage of the EMU in the late 1990s. In this case, a series of domestic political constraints prevailed, such as the internal divisions within the ruling party and the parliamentary situation. In all other cases, the degree of government partisanship does not appear to have mattered. As such, hypothesis 5 is rejected.

Chapter 7. Concluding remarks

This thesis has examined government positions on European integration in the Nordic states and examined the question: *have Nordic government preferences on European integration been influenced by domestic political factors?* Using a most similar systems research design and based on an analysis of three case studies (i.e. Finland, Sweden and Norway), the thesis has argued that whereas contextual factors explored in the existing literature played an important role in shaping the Nordic states' relationship with the European Union, the role of domestic political variables should also be taken into consideration.

In this thesis, an analysis of differentiated integration has been preferred to the traditional membership/non-membership dichotomy in order to explain government preferences on Europe. As such, this analysis went beyond most existing studies by focusing on government preferences on European integration in five policies/policy areas where differentiation takes place.

The aim of this final chapter is to provide a general discussion of the thesis' research results and contribution to the existing literature. It is divided into three sections. The first one summarises the thesis' empirical contribution and its implications for the study of the Nordic states in comparative perspective. The second one explores its conceptual contribution, and how it challenges and completes the existing literature on party/government preferences on European integration. The third and final section of this chapter concludes this thesis by offering recommendations for future research.

7.1. Empirical contribution to the existing literature

Regarding the thesis' main research question, the findings outlined in the empirical and comparative chapters have some implications for the study of the Nordic states and European integration.

The main set of empirical contributions to the existing literature are related to the domestic political variables studied within the framework of this analysis, and discussed in section 6.3. First, the comparative analysis emphasised the strong influence that the Nordic parliaments have been able to exercise in terms of shaping government positions on Europe and, more broadly, their respective state's relationship with the European

Union. Even though party positions differ from one country to the other and are not necessarily influenced by party family affiliation (see section 6.1), governments have tended to follow the majority stance in parliament, even if this contrasts with their ‘own’ majoritarian view in the government. As such, this analysis confirms that the Nordic states are truly parliamentary democracies (see e.g. Arter 1999; 2006; Bergman and Strøm 2011; Rasch 2011a; see also section 1.2). Second, in most cases, it appears that the majority view in a coalition shapes the governments’ positions on European integration. This also applies when a government is composed of parties that do not always share the same views on Europe. With the sole exception of the Syse cabinet in Norway in 1990, no coalition government resigned because of a European issue. Likewise, despite the presence of some anti-integrationist parties in parliament and, sometimes, at the executive level, no government has ever called for a form of European disintegration. This demonstrates the broad political consensus surrounding European issues in the Nordic states. Third, minority governments can still be in favour of deepening the country’s relationship with the European Union: the lack of majority at the executive level thus does not necessarily affect its stance on integration. Fourth, government ideology does not seem to affect support or opposition to Europe, as leftist, centrist and rightist governments generally supported developments at the European level.

Two other sets of findings that do not directly relate to the domestic variables explored in this study should also be highlighted, as they help understanding the Nordic states’ experience in terms of European integration. These are the relationship between pro- and anti-integrationist parties, and government preferences on differentiated integration.

Relationship between pro- and anti- integrationist parties

In the Nordic states, it has been demonstrated that parties opposed to participation in the process of European integration are not marginalised. Indeed, some of them figure amongst the well-established parties, and have been part of a coalition government in some cases. This is however a recent phenomenon, which contradicts earlier analyses. For instance, Sitter (2001: 36) determined that “[p]arty-based Euro-scepticism in Scandinavia emerges very much as the politics of opposition, both because its presence is directly linked to opposition politics and because it shapes coalition politics”. Even though such a statement was accurate at the time of publication, the more recent Norwegian

Stoltenberg II coalition seems to contradict this finding, as the government was composed of the two anti-integrationist parties, namely the Socialist Left and the Centre, and as the agreement took a more negative stance with regards to the EU membership issue than its predecessors. In sum, the relationship between pro- and anti-integrationist parties has evolved over time. It now appears that opposition to Europe does not rule out participation in coalition governments.

Government preferences on differentiated integration

Tables 3.2, 4.2 and 5.2 show that some Nordic political parties support certain forms of differentiated integration. In most of these cases, parties defend the status quo in terms of their country's experience of European integration, thus accepting the existing situation. However, some parties (i.e. Vp in Sweden, Sp and SV in Norway) have adopted a different stance by advocating for differentiated *disintegration*. As such, they do not accept the existing agreements between their respective states and European institutions, thus calling for a renegotiation or a re-examination of the relationship with Brussels. While such stances do not necessarily compromise the parties' participation in coalition governments (e.g. Stoltenberg II), they have never been adapted at the executive level. In other words, no government has called for differentiated disintegration or to renegotiate existing agreements. As a consequence, it can be argued that disintegration is not considered as politically viable at the executive level. In the cases where a government shows signs of reluctance towards participation in European integration, it would rather call for a status quo. This confirms recent findings from Taggart and Szczerbiak (2013: 33): "we can see evidence of Euroscepticism being significantly tempered by participation in government".

7.2. Conceptual contribution to the existing literature

The findings of this thesis have several implications for the study of party and government preferences on European integration. These conceptual contributions to the existing literature are related to two main features: the impact that ideology plays on government positions and, in a broader sense, the study of party- and government preferences on

European integration. The following paragraphs outline how this thesis challenges existing studies.

Government ideology

In contrast to hypothesis 5, it appears that governments' support for European integration does *not* decline as they move further to either the left or right. Hence, the hypothesis related to governments' non-centrism is dismissed. This partially contradicts the studies conducted by Aspinwall (2002; 2007). Indeed, whereas he determined that "centrist governments support integration whereas government composed of more extreme parties oppose it" (Aspinwall 2002: 106), this does not appear to be the case in terms of the Nordic states' participation in the European Union or in the selected European policies.

This thesis' findings on the influence of government ideology can also be extended beyond the formulation of hypothesis 5. Indeed, while ideological non-centrism does not appear to play a role in shaping government positions on European integration, it also seems that leftist governments are *not necessarily* more supportive than rightists governments are in the selected Nordic countries, even in policy areas where differentiation does take place. This contradicts Aspinwall (2007: 112) who demonstrated that "in the case of government policy choice in the Council of Ministers, leftists choose co-operation, rightists choose autonomy". Whereas this finding applies to the case of *vertical* integration (as established by the author), this thesis showed that it is not necessarily the case for government preferences on horizontal integration. This could have a strong impact on future research (see next section).

Studying party and government preferences on European integration

As discussed in section 2.4, analysing governments' preferences on European integration has first required this study to consider *party* preferences, as well as engaging with the literature on party-based Euroscepticism. The scale and terminology used within the framework of this thesis was inspired by studies from Taggart and Szczerbiak; Kopecký and Mudde; and Hooghe *et al.* It proved to be a useful tool to establish party and government support for integration on EU / EEA membership as well as in the selected

policy areas where differentiation has taken place (i.e. CFSP, AFSJ and EMU). Some findings that are not directly related to the five hypotheses would also need to be outlined, as they could refine studies on elite preferences on European integration in the future.

The empirical findings of this study demonstrate that it is rather difficult to theorise party and government preferences on European integration. That is why the thesis has not attempted to build a new categorisation of Euroscepticism. Instead, the scale that has been used demonstrates that party preferences on Europe significantly vary from one policy area to the other. It would be difficult therefore to categorise a party that supports participation in the AFSJ but opposes the CFSP as 'Eurosceptic' ('soft' or 'hard', in the words of Taggart and Szczerbiak 2001), and coming up with another category is likely to lead to more semantic confusion on this nebulous concept. Besides this apparent distinction, several other factors should be borne in mind. For instance, the numerous internal divisions on the European issue, which is reflected in the scale used, and as demonstrated in some cases (e.g. the Finnish Centre Party, the Swedish Social Democratic Party and the Norwegian Labour Party) are also likely to influence government positions.

More generally, it seems appropriate to draw the distinction between party/government support for *vertical* (i.e. deepening) and party/government support for *horizontal* (i.e. widening) European integration. This thesis has focused on the expressed support for the state's participation in policy areas where differentiated integration is likely to take place, thus emphasising the horizontal aspect of integration. Parties' and governments' support for vertical integration, however, could show different results, as demonstrated e.g. by Hooghe *et al.* (2002) and Aspinwall (2007). In addition, some parties change their stances on participation in a policy area over time, depending on the evolving context or on their own political strategy (e.g. VAS and VIHR in Finland). These elements should be borne in mind when it comes to considering party-based Euroscepticism. In sum, this thesis has raised the question whether it is really worth categorising political parties depending on their positions on European integration. Even though the tools offered by Taggart and Szczerbiak on the one hand, and by Kopecký and Mudde on the other are considered as useful tools to categorise opposition to European co-operation, the reality is much more complex than the dichotomy between 'soft' and 'hard' Eurosceptics, or between the 'Euroenthusiast', 'Europragmatist', 'Eurosceptic' and 'Euroreject' ideal-types. This thesis has shown that it is relevant to also include party and government positions on specific policy areas rather than viewing European integration as a whole.

Overall, this thesis suggests that while it is first essential to study preferences on Europe at the *party* level, it can also be useful to further focus on *government* attitudes. Whereas Tables 3.2, 4.2 and 5.2 summarise party positions on participation in the European integration process per policy area, these can be compared to Table 6.2 which outlines the various governments' positions, the latter not necessarily being the reflection of the former. Hence, this analysis has modestly contributed to the literature on European integration by shining a light on governments' preferences, which seem to be broadly downplayed. There is much that could be done on government-based Euroscepticism in the future, especially with regards to differentiated integration.

7.3. Recommendations for future research

The study of differentiated integration is becoming a trend (Holzinger and Schimmelfennig 2012). With on-going debates on the future shape of European integration, as well as discussions on the potential for disintegration, many studies are likely to discuss this concept in the near future. By focusing on governments' preferences on horizontal integration, this thesis can serve as a good basis that can lead to future research on these topics. The aim of this section is to offer tentative suggestions for further studies regarding the issues raised in this analysis.

One key question that can be raised is the following: can these findings be applied outside of the Nordic region? Could we find similar patterns beyond these countries? With regards to the influence of national parliaments, for example, it would seem fair to consider such findings to be common to all parliamentary democracies participating in the process of European integration, both in the core and in the periphery of the EU. With regards to the composition of governments, it has been demonstrated those parties that show signs of opposition to Europe (including, more recently, the anti-integrationist parties in Norway) are viable as coalition partners. How does this impact on governments' programmes beyond those of the Nordic states? Does the majority position in the coalition prevail? And if not, why not? Furthermore, is government ideology equally insignificant in other countries? These questions could be raised in future research.

While a plethora of studies focusing on party positions on European integration (and party-based Euroscepticism) exist, studies that address *government* preferences are rather

limited. Even though this can be explained by the fact that parties constitute the basic unity forming governments, it is surprising that the existing literature often ignores the government programmes, which can sometimes differ from stances promoted in party manifestos. Offering a conceptualisation of government preferences could thus contribute to the literature in the near future. However, as demonstrated in this analysis, opposition to European integration can take several forms, and a series of important factors, such as internal divisions or variation per policy areas, should not be forgotten. Rather than offering a new classification of Euroscepticism as such (which would further complicate future case studies), it is suggested herein that the scale that has been used to capture variation in government (and party) positions, ranging from unanimous opposition (-) to unanimous support (++) for EU membership and/or participation in the specific policy areas, enables researchers to offer a clearer understanding of how the extent to which political elites are opposed to European co-operation. Furthermore, this averts terminological confusion, which was the main criticism of the existing categorisations of Euroscepticism (see section 2.4).

In conclusion, government as well as party positions on European integration offer a goldmine for European studies scholars. The recent financial crisis has led to an increase in mass-level and elite Euroscepticism, which has further enabled some populist right parties to strengthen their positions in national parliaments. Recent and upcoming general elections will enable researchers to conduct studies that could challenge existing findings in the field. By offering a comparative analysis of three Nordic governments' positions between 1990 and 2010, this thesis could also pave the way for redefining studies on elite preferences on European integration.

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Appendix 1. Research notes (interviews)

As discussed in section 2.3, in order to triangulate the data stemming from the official documents, a total of 26 elite interviews were conducted between October 2012 and March 2014. The majority of them (21) were conducted in person during my research stay at the ARENA Centre for European Studies from the University of Oslo, between October 2012 and July 2013. In addition, five interviews (with Swedish elites) were conducted by telephone and followed the similar method. The interviewee selection criteria targeted those who were assumed to have particular knowledge or insight of the areas the research was concerned with. These included members of national parliaments who were members of EU-related parliamentary committees, former ministers and/or party leaders, party secretaries, and policy advisers on international/European affairs with formal ties to the party (see Appendix 2 for a complete list). A total of 107 potential interviewees were contacted. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to arrange interviews with representatives from three parties: the Norwegian Centre Party; the Swedish Social Democratic Party; and the Swedish Left Party. Even though at least 10 representatives were contacted for each of these parties, none were available or willing to participate in this project.

All interviewees were contacted (in English) by email at least one month before the meeting. A brief document summarising the purpose of the project was attached to this email (see Appendix 3). As some answers could have been sensitive (especially regarding internal divisions within the party), all of the interviews were conducted on a non-attributable basis. Most face-to-face interviews lasted between 45 and 50 minutes. Interviews conducted by telephone lasted between 25 and 30 minutes. All were recorded with the consent of the participants, and a summary of the key statements used in this analysis were then sent for approval. In all cases, no changes were requested or suggested by the interviewees.

Appendix 2. List of interviews

Note: in order to preserve anonymity, party leaders and secretaries are listed as spokespersons.

Finland

Interview with a MP from the Christian Democrats (14 May 2013)

Interview with a MP and with a spokesperson from the National Coalition Party (14 May 2013)

Interview with a spokesperson from the Left Alliance (14 May 2013)

Interview with a spokesperson from the Social Democratic Party (15 May 2013)

Interview with a spokesperson from the Swedish People's Party (15 May 2013)

Interview with a spokesperson from the Centre Party (16 May 2013)

Interview with a MP from the Finns Party (16 May 2013)

Interview with a MP and a policy adviser from the Finns Party (17 May 2013)

Interview with a MP from the Finns Party (17 May 2013)

Interview with a MP from the Finns Party (21 May 2013)

Interview with a policy adviser from the Green League (22 May 2013)

Interview with a MP from the Centre Party (22 May 2013)

Sweden

Interview with a MP from the Moderate Party (20 February 2014)

Interview with a policy adviser from the Christian Democrats (12 March 2014)

Interview with a MP from the Green Party (25 March 2014)

Interview with a spokesperson from the Centre Party (7 April 2014)

Interview with a former spokesperson from the Liberal People's Party (11 April 2014)

Norway

Interview with a MP from the Progress Party (11 October 2012)

Interview with a MP from the Progress Party (22 October 2012)

Interview with a policy adviser from the Socialist Left Party (11 October 2012)

Interview with a MP from the Conservative Party (12 October 2012)

Interview with a MP from the Labour Party (23 October 2012)

Interview with two spokespersons from the Conservative Party (7 November 2012)

Interview with a former MP from the Labour Party (7 November 2012)

Interview with a MP from the Liberal Party (5 June 2013)

Interview with a policy adviser from the Christian Democratic Party (17 July 2013)

Appendix 3. Information sent to interviewees



To whom it may concern

Politics and International Relations
Chrystal Macmillan Building
15a George Square
Edinburgh
EH8 9LD
United Kingdom

(Date)

Information to interviewees regarding the Ph.D. project entitled “The Nordic States and Differentiated Integration in the European Union”

The aim of my thesis is to determine why Nordic States have had different government positions regarding European integration, from the early 1990s to nowadays. In order to answer this main research question, I focus on common features of the Nordic countries and assess their impact in shaping these government positions. As empirical studies on differentiated integration are limited, this thesis will strongly contribute to the existing literature on the topic.

Within the framework of this thesis, I am conducting interviews with Members of the Nordic Parliaments, Governments, policy advisers and party leaders/secretaries in order to assess the position of their party/government regarding several aspects of European integration. I wish to conduct a semi-structured topical interview dealing mainly with this issue – what is the position of your party regarding EU membership, has this view changed or been challenged in the past twenty years, what influence does the EU play on your country, etc. The exact duration of the interview will depend on how much time you have available, but should not last more than 50 minutes.

If possible, I would prefer to use a digital recorder to ensure information integrity and avoid researcher bias. All interviews will be anonymised, it might be necessary to include your current and/or previous occupation(s) within your party. A transcribed summary of the quotes I would like to use in the thesis will be sent to you for approval within 30 days following our meeting.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone (+44 784 203 7393) or e-mail (benjamin.leruth@ed.ac.uk). You can also contact my supervisors by e-mail: Dr. Pontus Odmalm (pontus.odmalm@ed.ac.uk) and Dr. Elizabeth Bomberg (e.bomberg@ed.ac.uk).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Benjamin Leruth', written over a horizontal line.

Benjamin LERUTH
Ph.D. Candidate
School of Social and Political Science
University of Edinburgh

Appendix 4. Structure of the interviews

1. General information on the party

- What type of party would you say that [name of party] is?
 - Where would you locate [name of party] on a left-right scale?
 - Has this position changed in the last 20 years?
- Which party/parties is [name of party] closest to in [country]?
- Does [name of party] co-operate with other Nordic parties?

2. Party preferences on European integration

- How would you describe the position of [name of party] on:
 - EEA/EU membership?
 - Participation in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice/Schengen?
 - Participation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy/Nordic Battle Group?
 - Participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union?
- Has this view changed in the last 20 years?
- Does [name of party] overall agree or disagree on these positions on European integration?
 - If disagreements, how divided is [name of party]?
- Is [name of party] happy with the current range of agreements between [country] and the European Union?
- Does [name of party] promote differentiated European integration?
- [more specific questions depending on the cases]

3. European integration in [country]

- Who would you say takes the lead in shaping national politics regarding European integration?
- How divided is [country's] electorate on the issue of European integration?
- Why does Euroscepticism exist/is so strong in [country]?
- [more specific questions depending on the cases]

Appendix 5. Measures of party and government ideology

Note: The data presented in this Appendix are based on the original work from the Comparative Manifesto Project, which is available at <https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu>. Whereas party values on the CMP left-right scale are available on this website, all calculations based on Kim and Fording's index of government partisanship were made by the author of this thesis, based on the following formula (discussed in section 2.4):

$$\sum \{Ideology_i * (\#Posts_i / Total Posts)\}$$

Where:

#Posts_i = the total number of cabinet posts controlled by party *i*;

Ideology_i = the ideology of party *I* (i.e. the value on the CMP scale); and

Total Posts = the total number of posts (or ministerial portfolios).

The total number of posts/ministerial portfolios for each cabinet is based on data available in academic publications, mostly from the European Political Data Yearbooks (European Journal of Political Research). For Finland, see Sundberg (1992; 1996; 2000; 2004; 2008). For Sweden, see Sainsbury (1989); Pierre and Widfeldt (1992; 1999); Widfeldt and Pierre (1995); Widfeldt (2003a; 2007; 2011). For Norway, see Aardal (1990); Heidar (1994); Narud (1998); Aalberg (2002; 2010); Aalberg and Brekken (2006).

Finland – party values

	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007	AVERAGE
KOK	-4.5	14.6	29.5	9.8	-20.6	5.76
SDP	1.2	-13.7	-1.4	-24.7	-36.4	-15
KESK	1.3	26.8	-1	-7.6	-15.1	0.88
RKP	-7.7	4.1	14.5	-19.9	-25.5	-6.9
VAS	-30.4	-14.9	-38.2	-45.9	-42.1	-34.3
VIHR	-38.6	-13.4	-6.3	-33.5	-21.5	-22.66
PS	13.1	13.1	-5.9	-5.9	-6.5	1.58
KD	5	24.3	19.4	7.8	-15.1	8.28
AVERAGE	-7.575	5.1125	1.325	-14.9875	-22.85	

Finland – government values

	Aho I	Aho II	Lipponen I	Lipponen II	Jäätteenmäki / Vanhanen I	Vanhanen II / Kiviniemi
KOK - posts	6	6	5	6	8	0
SDP - posts	0	0	7	6	0	8
KESK - posts	8	8	0	0	8	8
RKP - posts	2	2	2	2	2	2
VAS - posts	0	0	2	2	0	0
VIHR - posts	0	0	1	1	0	2
PS - posts	0	0	0	0	0	0
KD - posts	1	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL POSTS	17	16	18	18	18	20
IDEOLOGY				-		
GOVERNMENT	-1.5882353	-2	3.2166667	6.38333333	-1.233333333	-25.3

Sweden – party values

	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	AVERAGE
M	36.7	43.8	40.2	37.4	38.1	4	2.5	28.9571429
SAP	-23.9	-6.2	23.8	-3.5	-18.3	-24.2	-32.3	-12.085714
C	-5.3	5.4	21.8	11.6	10.6	-4.5	-2.2	5.34285714
Vp	-37.4	-42.8	-27.3	-36	-33.7	-36	-12.2	-32.2
MdG	-18.4	-12.6	-6.3	-36.1	-26.1	-11.6	-9.2	-17.185714
Fp	-7.7	3.9	19.3	14.3	0.9	14.6	-4.8	5.78571429
KDS		-4.5	14	4.8	6.3	0.8	8.1	4.91666667
AVERAGE	-9.33333333	-1.8571429	12.2142857	-1.0714286	-3.1714286	-8.1285714	-7.1571429	

Sweden – government values

	Carlsson II	Bildt	Carlsson III / Persson a	Persson b	Persson c	Reinfeldt a	Reinfeldt b
M - posts	0	9	0	0	0	11	13
SAP - posts	22	0	22	20	22	0	0
C - posts	0	4	0	0	0	4	4
Vp - posts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MdG - posts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fp - posts	0	4	0	0	0	4	4
KDS - posts	0	3	0	0	0	3	3
TOTAL POSTS	22	21	22	20	22	22	24
IDEOLOGY							
GOVERNMENT	-23.9	19.9	23.8	-3.5	-18.3	3.94545455	1.2

Norway – party values

	1989	1993	1997	2001	2005	2009	AVERAGE
H	-7.1	14.4	3.7	9.8	13.4	-11.4	3.8
A	-36	-19.7	-18.1	-38.2	-33.3	-29.8	-29.183333
Sp	-19.9	-15.6	-10.6	-27.3	-17.6	-20.4	-18.566667
SV	-34.7	-32.4	-25.4	-44	-38	-40.1	-35.766667
FrP	24.2	43.6	23.5	24	16.9	6.8	23.1666667
KrF	-21.4	2	-4.5	-18.6	-24.4	-11.1	-13
V	-20.6	-7.3	-7.9	-15.5	-23.8	-18.5	-15.6
AVERAGE	-16.5	-2.1428571	-5.6142857	-15.685714	-15.257143	-17.785714	

Norway – government values

	Syse	Brundtland III	Brundtland IV / Jagland	Bondevik I	Stoltenberg I	Bondevik II	Stoltenberg II a	Stoltenberg II b
H - posts	9	0	0	0	0	10	0	0
A - posts	0	19	19	0	19	0	10	12
Sp - posts	5	0	0	6	0	0	4	4
SV - posts	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4
FrP - posts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
KrF - posts	5	0	0	9	0	6	0	0
V - posts	0	0	0	4	0	3	0	0
TOTAL POSTS	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	20
IDEOLOGY GOVERNMENT	-14.23157895	-36	-19.7	-7.1421053	-18.1	-3.1631579	-31.2315789	-29.98