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### Update to Chapter 6: The European Parliament

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**February 2020**

In the run-up to the elections to the European Parliament in May 2019, many commentators anticipated a surge of the populist vote. As seen in Table 6.1. the centre-right European People's Party (EPP; which unified national Christian democratic parties) as well as the Socialists and Democrats (S&D; which was the umbrella organisation for left-of-centre social democratic parties) suffered substantial setbacks and lost their combined majority. The EPP's number of seats was reduced by 39 (from 221 to 182), although the group gained five seats in the post-Brexit adjustment. The S&D also struggled and relinquished 44 seats (from 191 to 153), which confirmed the long-term trend of established mass parties facing difficulties in mobilising their traditional voter bases. But other pro-EU parties made significant gains. The number of seats for Liberal democratic parties surged from 67 to 98. Green parties fared equally well, and their number of seats rose from 50 to 67. In contrast, populist parties fared less well than predicted. The European parliament of 2019 will host two Euro-sceptic and anti-EU groupings. The newly formed umbrella of 'Identity and Democracy' integrates Salvini's *la Lega*, le Pen's *Rassemblement National*, and the *Alternative für Deutschland*. It became only the fourth biggest party bloc with 76 seats. The 'European Conservative and Reformists Group' which is home to Poland's Law and Justice Party went from 70 to 62 seats. And 'Europe for Freedom and Direct Democracy', the forum for Nigel Farage's Brexit Party, disbanded after the UK left the European Union in January 2020. Adding up all EU-sceptic and anti-EU seats results in a total of 177. This is a significant rise from the 118 seats that these party groupings received in 2014, but it still only represents 25.1 per cent, and the large majority of members of the European parliament belong to pro-EU parties.

**Table 6.1. Results of Elections to the European Parliament, 2019 seat allocation after Brexit adjustment**

Name of Party Grouping	Political spectrum	Seat numbers	Seats (%)
EPP: European People's Party	Pro EU Christian Democratic	187	26.5
S&D: Socialists & Democrats	Pro EU Social Democratic	147	20.8
Renew Europe	Pro EU Liberal Democratic	98	13.9
Greens/EFA: Greens & European Free Alliance	Pro EU Green	76	10.8
ID: Identity and Democracy	EU Sceptic, right wing populism	67	9.5
ECR: European Conservative and Reformists	EU Sceptic, conservative	62	8.9
GUE/NGL: Confederal Group of United Left and Nordic Greens	EU Sceptic, hard left	39	5.5
Non-Attached members	n/a	29	4.1
Total		705	100

**Table 6.2. Allocation of Seats in European Parliament by Country**

<b>Pre Brexit</b>	<b>Post Brexit</b>	
96	96	Germany
74	79	France
73	---	UK
73	76	Italy
54	59	Spain
51	52	Poland
32	33	Romania
26	29	Netherlands
21	21	Greece, Portugal, Czech Republic, Hungary, Belgium
20	21	Sweden
18	19	Austria
17	17	Bulgaria
13	14	Denmark, Slovakia
11	13	Ireland
11	12	Croatia
11	11	Lithuania
8	8	Latvia, Slovenia
6	7	Estonia
6	6	Luxembourg, Cyprus, Malta
751 Total	705 Total	

**Table 6.3. Turnout in EP elections**

<b>Year of Election</b>	<b>Turnout (%)</b>
1979	63.0
1984	61.0
1989	58.5
1994	56.8
1999	49.8
2004	45.7
2009	42.9
2014	42.5
2019	50.7