

## **Groups of the European Parliament**

Most Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) belong to political parties in their respective countries, but these members then form groups in the EU parliament, typically along party lines. Other than the various Non-Inscrits (NI), who wish to remain unaligned, here are all of the current groups roughly in order of political leaning:

### **European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)**

*Left to far-left*

GUE/NGL is composed of non-revolutionary anti-capitalists such as democratic socialists and some communists. They believe in extensive economic restructuring and socialization, deep changes to the social and civil structures of their governments, and generally push environmental activism. GUE/NGL parties are largely skeptical of the EU and other international agreements on trade and immigration, viewing them sometimes as roadblocks to the establishment of the broad changes they seek.

### **Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D)**

*Center-left*

The group for traditional, European-style social democrats. Though mostly socially liberal and focused on environmental issues, S&D parties are defined by their economic progressivism and deep support for European healthcare and social welfare programs. They are generally pro-EU, and advocate for increased spending by the EU as a whole. In other areas, such as drug issues and immigration, the stances of member parties vary. S&D and the center-right EPP are and have always been the two largest groups in Parliament, but have recently lost ground to other groups.

### **The Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA)**

*Center to left*

The Greens/EFA group comprises a unique mix of political parties. The majority of them are center-left, environmentally-focused green parties, but they also include parties for regional issues, direct democracy-focused pirate parties, and a few others. Parties in this group tend to be the most environmental and socially liberal, promoting cultural diversity, minority rights, youth issues, and drug legalization more on average than any other group. Though generally pro-EU, some parties in Greens/EFA promote increasing the power of local governments.

### **Renew Europe (RE)**

*Center*

Renew Europe was, until recently, known as the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE). This name change is unsurprising, as RE is the group most concerned with strengthening EU institutions, advocating for vastly increasing the scope and powers of the EU. They are also the most internationally-focused group, promoting freedom of movement, free trade, and political accords. They mostly promote aiding the environment, are typically very socially liberal, and tend to focus on increasing the efficiency of existing social programs, as opposed to creating new ones. RE parties also appeal to businesses through certain liberal economic policies, though individual parties may lean slightly more to the left or right.

### **European People's Party (EPP)**

*Center-right*

Longtime rival of S&D, EPP is currently the largest group in parliament. They are politically and economically cautiously conservative, favoring a tempered restriction of the size of government, and the promotion of certain economically liberal business interests. Much like S&D, EPP parties are bound primarily through economic positions, and their other individual positions can vary, including on social issues, immigration, and environmental policy, but they are usually moderate stances. They are pro-EU, but view it more sternly, as a vehicle to ensure peace and cooperation, rather than as a way of solving countries' ills.

### **European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)**

*Center-right to right*

ECR is more solidly conservative than EPP in most every regard. Though sometimes advocates for relaxing economic regulations, they are primarily bound by their social conservatism. They generally acknowledge climate change, but do less to prioritize it, and are more commonly opposed to immigration, wanting those that do come through to be deeply integrated in local cultures. They are also highly skeptical of the EU, and, though most do not wish to be rid of it entirely, they tend to advocate for reforms and reduction of its powers.

### **Identity and Democracy (ID)**

*Right to far-right*

The European far-right and populist conservatives are represented primarily by ID. Its parties are typically isolationist, can downplay environmental issues, are highly culturally and socially conservative, and anti-immigration in many more cases than other groups. They tend to promote nationalistic pride in their claimed national cultures. All ID parties bear extreme skepticism of the EU, with some wanting to drastically slash its power, while others want to leave it or abolish it entirely.