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MEPs Towards Urban Policy – in Search of Conditions for their Activity on the Forum of the European Parliament[1]

Abstract: The article deals with the 'presence' of urban policy on the forum of the European Parliament (EP) in 1994–2019. The research based on the use of the analysis of EPs and EuPPs documents proves that the political affiliation of the MEPs does not determine their activity focused on urban policy. It is therefore difficult to grasp the relationship between the MEPs activity and the fact of belonging to a particular EPPG, the 'size' (representation) of EPPGs, as well as the actions conducted by EuPPs. The research results lead to the search for other determinants of the activity of MEPs.

Key words: Urban Agenda for the EU, urban policy, Members of European Parliament, European Parliament Political Groups, European Political Parties

Introduction

The decision-making process of the European Union (EU) is based on the activity of a wide range of entities. Among them, there are three institutions which play a decisive role, namely the European Commission (EC), the Council of the European Union (Council) and the European Parliament (EP). Urban policy is one of the many (sectoral) problem areas that interest these institutions. The importance of agreements regarding urban policy is a derivative of at least several factors, among which the 'rise of cities', described by, among others, Glaeser (2011), Barber (2013), Jaime Luque, Patrick Bacon and Macauly Bauer (2015), is significant, if not the most important. The authors pay attention to the far-reaching reconfiguration of the hitherto 'positioning' of cities, which goes

[1] The article presents the results of the project 'Urban dimension of European Community's policy – genesis and evolution' implemented within the International Visegrad Fund Research Grant Programme 2021–2022 at the Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU) of the European University Institute (EUI).

beyond the traditional, i.e., hierarchical system of dependencies based on the domination of the nation-state (Bartolini, 2005). An apparent increase in the importance of the so-called local (urban)[2] level in meeting the collective needs of citizens is a result of this reconfiguration.

The article deals with the issue of the ‘presence’ of urban policy on the forum of one of the key EU institutions, namely the EP. It presents the research results on the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy. The study covered MEPs of five terms of office to the EP – namely the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth terms (1994–2019).

The article consists of several parts. In addition to the introduction, the author reviews the process of the Urban Agenda for the EU formulation. Furthermore, the main research aims and methods are described. However, the analysis of the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy plays a key role. The paper is completed with a section that discusses the research findings and draws some conclusions from these findings.

Urban Agenda for the EU

The analysis of the literature devoted to the Urban Agenda for the EU suggests that researchers focus on three, as it seems, fundamental directions of analysis. The first direction concerns the formation of the Urban Agenda for the EU, including the role and position of the EU institutions (Bache, 1998; Olejnik, 2017; Armondi, Gregorio Hurtado, 2019; Armondi, De Gregorio, 2022). The second direction is connected with the catalogue of problems and topics related to the functioning of cities and their inhabitants, which the Urban Agenda for the EU responds to (Fedeli, 2014; Robin, Steenmans, Acuto, 2017; Potjer, Hajer, Pelzer Purkarthofer, 2019; Franz De, 2021). The third direction is determined by the results of the formation of the Urban Agenda for the EU in the form of not only legal acts but, above all, the programmes and financial instruments that public, social and private actors can reach for (Bache, 2007; Mocca, 2018; Neto, Serrano, Santos, 2019). The author focuses on the first and, as it seems, the key direction of scientific reflection.

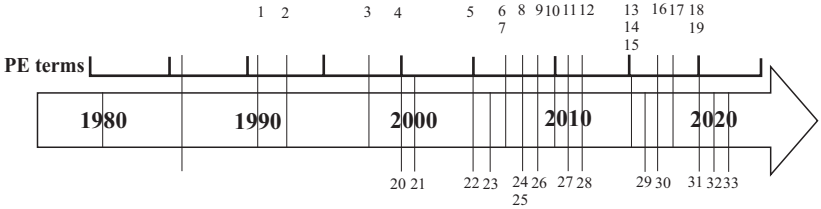
Forming the Urban Agenda for the EU is a long-term and internally complex process. Although the main stage of work falls in the second decade of the 21st century, the first attempts to define a European ap-

[2] Unless otherwise indicated, the terms ‘local’ and ‘urban’ are treated as synonymous terms.

proach to urban policy fall in a much earlier period. Graph 1 illustrates the key ‘links’ of the Urban Agenda for the EU formation from the turn of the 1980s and 1990s to the ninth term of the EP (Bache, 1998; 2007). These are official documents – communications, reports, declarations and conclusions – developed during the activities of the EC and the Council.

Graph 1. The formation of the Urban Agenda for the EU – the impact of EC and the Council

EC impact on the Urban Agenda for the EU



Council impact on the Urban Agenda for the EU

European Commission:

1. Green paper on urban environment;
2. Urbanization and the functions of cities in the European Community;
3. Towards an urban agenda in the European Union;
4. European Spatial Development Perspective. Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union;
5. Towards a thematic strategy on the urban environment;
6. Cohesion Policy and cities. The urban contribution to growth and jobs in the regions;
7. Thematic strategy on the urban environment;
8. Towards a new culture for urban mobility;
9. Green paper on territorial cohesion: Turning territorial diversity into strength;
10. Action Plan on urban mobility;
11. The urban dimension in Community policies for the period 2007–2013;
12. Cities of tomorrow. Challenges, visions, ways forward;
13. Cities of tomorrow: Investing in Europe;
14. The urban dimension of EU policies – Key features of an EU urban agenda;
15. Scenarios for Integrated Territorial Investments;
16. Quality of Life in European Cities 2015;
17. Report from the Commission to the Council on the Urban Agenda for the EU;
18. Online Brochure on ‘the state of play of the Urban Agenda for the EU – Multi-level governance in action’;
19. Assessment Study of the Urban Agenda for the European Union.

Council of European Union:

20. European Spatial Development Perspective – Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union;
21. Lille Action Programme;
22. Urban Aquis;

23. Bristol Accord;
24. Territorial Agenda of the European Union. Towards a More Competitive and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions;
25. Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities;
26. Marseilles Statement;
27. Toledo Declaration;
28. Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020. Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions;
29. Riga Declaration. Towards the EU Urban Agenda;
30. Pact of Amsterdam. Urban Agenda for the EU Agenda;
31. Bucharest Declaration. Towards a common framework for urban development in the European Union;
32. New Leipzig Charter. The transformative power of cities for the common good;
33. Ljubljana Agreement and its Multiannual Working Programme.

Source: Author’s own compilation based on: Glinka, 2020; 2022a; 2022b.

In the first case (EC), there are as many as nineteen documents, ranging from the Green Paper on Urban Environment in 1990 and ending with the Assessment Study of the Urban Agenda for the European Union of 2020. In the second case (the Council), fourteen documents are the subject of the analysis, ranging from the European Spatial Development Perspective – Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union from 1999 to the Ljubljana Agreement and its Multiannual Working Program from 2021. These are not all documents agreed upon during the formation of the Urban Agenda for the EU. The characterisation of all the ‘links’ in this process goes beyond the scope of this study and is not the author’s goal (cf. Glinka, 2022a; 2022b).

It is worth noting that the EC and the Council are the EU institutions that play a key role in forming the Urban Agenda for the EU. For this reason, the achievements of the EC and the Council are presented in Graph 1. One may be tempted to say that, in this regard, the position of the EP is weaker than that of the EC and the Council (cf. Wiktorska-Święcka, 2016). It is limited to the adoption of a few resolutions, e.g., resolution from 2011 (European Parliament resolution of 23 June 2011 on European Urban Agenda and its Future in Cohesion Policy) and 2015 (European Parliament resolution of 9 September 2015 on the urban dimension of EU policies).

As shown in Graph 1, the formation of the Urban Agenda for the EU takes place during seven terms of the EP – the third (1989–1994), the fourth (1994–1999), the fifth (1999–2004), the sixth (2004–2009), the seventh (2009–2014), the eighth (2014–2019) and the ninth (2019–2024)

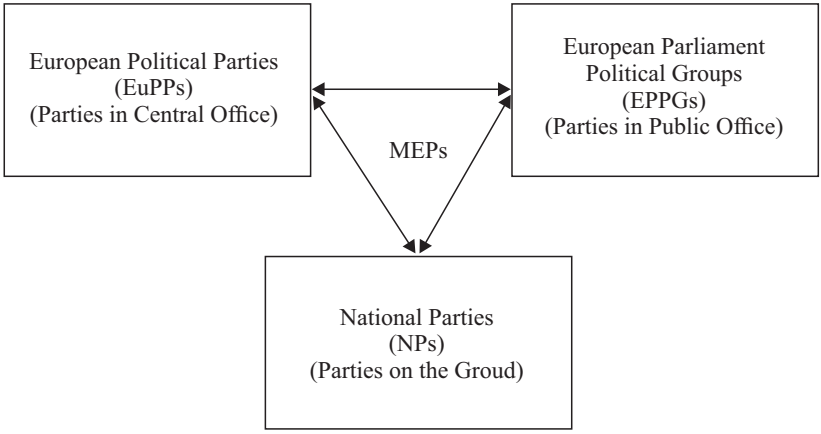
terms. It can therefore be assumed that the MEPs of these terms of office express their interest in the affairs of cities and their inhabitants, even if EP is not the main architect of the Urban Agenda for the EU and, what is connected, is located ‘on the edge’ of the EC and the Council actions.

Research Aims

The article aims to answer the question about the determinants of the ‘presence’ of urban policy on the EP forum. Therefore, the author is interested in the factors that make MEPs undertake activities focused on urban policy.

The analysis is based on one key distinction. According to Calossi (2016, p. 26), it is about the distinction between European Parliament Political Groups (EPPGs) and European Political Parties (EuPPs), formerly known as Political Parties at the European Level (PPELs) (Graph 2).

Graph 2. MEPs in a party entourage



Source: Calossi, 2016, 26; Mari, 2006; Day, Shaw, 2003; Michels, 1968.

It should be emphasised that, despite many objective differences, the relationship between the EPPGs and the EuPPs is very strong (Bardi, 1994; Kreppel, 2001; Hanley, 2008; Gagatek, Van Hecke, 2011; Pacześniak, Wiszniowski, 2014; Pacześniak, Rydliński, 2021). It is not about the party ‘lineage’ of MEPs – the members of the EPPGs who are

the members of both the EuPPs and the NPs. It should be emphasised that the EPPGs represent the EuPPs at the EP forum (Ladrech, 1996; Bardi et al., 2010; Bartolini, 2012; Bardi et al., 2014; Cicchi, 2016). For this reason, the analysis of the activity of the MEPs who belong to individual EPPGs must take into account, at least to a limited extent, the actions taken against ‘mother-parties’, i.e., EuPPs (Hix, Lord, 1997; Hix, Noury, Roland, 2007; Gray, 2008; Rodriguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2009; Priestly, 2011; Lindberg, Rasmussen, Warntjen, 2013).

A reflection on the activity of MEPs towards the urban policy is important for at least three reasons.

First, the EP is the only EU institution whose functioning ‘derives’ from a strong democratic legitimacy, namely free democratic elections. Importantly, national affiliation is not the ‘key’ of the activity of its MEPs. However, membership in one of the EPPGs plays a key role (Ahrens, Elomäki, Kantola, 2022).

Secondly, the EP is an EU institution whose status, and hence the scope of its competencies, has undergone many changes over forty years. As a result, the position of the EP has been strengthened, the most important manifestation of which is the extension of the catalogue of cases dealt with under the ordinary legislative procedure (on par with the Council).

Third, the activity of MEPs is ‘overshadowed’ by the scientific reflection on forming the Urban Agenda for the EU. It may be tempting to say that the works dedicated to the achievements of the EU the Council dominate very clearly.

Considering that, it seems reasonable to analyse whether membership to a specific EPPG and a specific EPP determines the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy. Therefore, for the purpose of this article, a hypothesis is formulated. According to the hypothesis, MEP’s political affiliation determines their activity focused on urban policy.

It is hard not to agree with the statement that the way of formulating the hypothesis reflects the essence of the functioning of political forces in the EP. Therefore, it is a situation in which MEPs, as the members of specific EPPGs, undertake activities under the political objectives of these EPPGs. Despite some kind of ‘obviousness’ of the hypothesis, it is worth paying attention to the two elements that justify its formulation. Firstly, MEPs have a free mandate. Membership in EPPGs does not have to determine their activity on the EP forum. Secondly, no analysis is devoted to the determinants of MEPs’ activity focused on urban policy. Considering these two, one can risk a statement that they provoke scientific reflection.

The activity of MEPs is understood as official (formal) legislative activity on the EP forum, which takes one of the six forms: 1) questions, 2) interpellations, 3) declarations, 4) proposals for a union act, 5) positions, and 6) join texts.[3]

Urban policy is defined as one of the EU sectoral policies aimed at defining and then satisfying the collective needs of urban communities, which materialise in many problematic areas, e.g., transport, housing, education, environment, recreation, social care, health care (Glinka, 2020; 2022a; 2022b; Tofarides, 2013; McCahn, 2015). Although public, private and social actors are the initiators and executors of these activities, in the analysed case, the author focuses only on public actors – EU institutions, mainly the EP. To sum up, urban policy in the analysed approach includes all the topics and problems related to the functioning of cities and city residents which are of interest to MEPs. Therefore, it is a very extensive catalogue, and Urban Agenda for the EU is its ‘glue’.

The following research questions accompany the hypothesis:

(1) In which terms of office of the EP is the ‘size’ of MEPs’ activity focused on urban policy the greatest and the lowest?

[3] Although the author’s goal is not to describe in detail individual forms of activity of MEPs, it is worth to mention their short characteristics (EP, 2022b; 2022c; 2022d):

1) questions – addressed by MEPs to other EU institutions and bodies; they are a direct form of parliamentary scrutiny. There are three categories of question: a) questions for oral answer dealt with during plenary sittings, b) questions for question time asked during the plenary sittings, c) written questions.
2) interpellations – addressed by EPPGs to the Council, the EC or the High-Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy;
3) declarations – they express MEP’s ideas and intentions;
4) proposals for a union act – addressed by MEPs to the Commission to propose a Union act;
5) positions – elements of the ordinary legislative procedure, the EP adopts its position at first reading on the basis of the proposal presented by the EC. If the position is not approved by the Council, the EP may adopt its position at second reading by adopting amendments to the Council position. As a general rule, EP positions take the form of consolidated texts, whereby political amendments and technical adaptations are incorporated in the EC proposal (at first reading) or the Council position (second reading).
6) join texts – where the EP and the Council cannot reach an agreement at first or second reading, the matter goes to ‘conciliation’. If the Conciliation Committee (composed of members of the Council and an equal number of MEPs) reaches an agreement, it adopts a joint text. This text is then submitted to the EP and the Council for approval (third reading).

(2) Representatives of which EPPGs show the greatest activity focused on urban policy?
(3) What is the relation of individual EuPPs to urban policy? Is it reflected in their activities, and if so, which one?

The hypothesis is verified through the analysis of several documents (these are the documents resulting from the activity of MEPs as EPPGs representatives and the documents of EPPs). Therefore, the sources used include the materials from EP’s official website (already mentioned questions, interpellations, declarations, proposals for a union act, positions and join texts), official websites of EPPs (programme documents and materials, e.g., reports, thematic studies, and press releases) and the collections of the Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU) of the European University Institute (EUI). Concerning the HAEU collections, two main groups of documents were analysed: EP’s plenary sittings documentation (from European Union institution deposits, namely the European Parliament deposit) and EPPGs documentation (from Corporate Bodies deposits, namely Political Groups of the European Parliament deposit). These were mainly MEPs’ questions devoted to urban policy issues.

MEPs Towards Urban Policy

Perspective of EPPGs

Table 1 is an attempt to compile and compare, on the one hand, the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy and, on the other hand, the affiliation of MEPs to specific EPPGs.

A reflection dedicated to the party affiliation of MEPs, especially with regard to their interest in the so-called urban issues, is not an easy task. At least two factors determine it.

The first factor is connected with the objective changes in the political competition structure at the EP level. Even a cursory analysis of the data presented in Table 1 proves that the number of rival factions has changed over the term. On the other hand, the second factor is related to the interfacial transfers understood through the prism of changing ‘party colours’ by individual MEPs.

In order to eliminate these methodological dilemmas, it was decided to include all the EPPGs operating in 1994–2019. Therefore, the study covered even such EPPGs that operated for less than one term.

Table 1

Activity of MEPs focused on urban policy according to EPPG affiliation (1994–2019)

EP term number	Number of political groups in the European Parliament whose MEPs are active in the field of urban policy	Number of activities of MEPs in relation to EPPGs															
		European People's Party (EPP)/European People's Party and European Democrats (EPP/ED)	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats(PASD)/Socialist (SG)/Party of European Socialists (PES)	Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)/European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR)	Greens/EFA	Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF)	European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)	European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUL/NGL)	Independence for a Europe of Nations IEN)	Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD)/Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD)	Union of Europe of the Nations (UEN)	Independence/Democracy (ID)	Union of Europe	European Radical Alliance (ERA)	Forza Europa (FE)	European Democratic Alliance (EDA)	unaffiliated	∑ (activities of MEPs)
8th	8	21	24	4	9	1	3	20	–	9	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	94
7th	7	36	24	6	12	–	1	14	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	97
6th	7	16	73	8	15	–	–	22	–	–	2	2	–	–	–	–	1	139
5th	6	12	18	3	5	–	–	10	–	–	27	–	–	–	–	–	1	76
4th	10	27	44	6	5	–	–	14	1	–	–	–	12	1	2	1	–	113
∑	Nd.	112	183	27	46	1	4	80	1	12	29	2	12	1	2	1	6	519

Source: Author's own compilation based on: EP, 2022a; 2022b; 2022c; HAEU, 1995a–h; 1996a–j; 1997a–j; 1998a–g; 1999a–e. The lack of MEP activity focused on the urban policy is marked in grey.

Table 2

Activity of MEPs focused on urban policy by the size of EPPGs (1994–2019)

EP erm number	Number of activities of MEPs in relation to the number of members of EPPGs															Σ (activities of MEPs)
	European People's Party (EPP)/European People's Party and European Democrats (EPP/ED)	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats(PASD)/Socialist (SG)/Party of European Socialists (PES)	Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)/European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR)	Greens/EFA	Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF)	European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)	European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUL/NGL)	Independence for a Europe of Nations IEN)	Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD)/Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD)	Union of Europe of the Nations (UEN)	Independence/Democracy (ID)	Union of Europe (UE)	European Radical Alliance (ERA)	Forza Europa (FE)	European Democratic Alliance (EDA)	unaffiliated	
8th	21/216	24/185	4/69	9/52	1/36	3/77	20/52	–	9/42	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	94
7th	36/273	24/195	6/83	12/57	–	1/57	14/35	–	3/31	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	97
6th	16/288	73/218	8/100	15/43	–	–	22/40	–	–	2/44	2/22	–	–	–	–	1	139
5th	12/295	18/232	3/67	5/47	–	–	10/55	–	–	27/30	–	–	–	–	–	1	76
4th	27/201	44/214	6/42	5/27	–	–	14/34	1/16	–	–	–	12/34	1/21	2/27	1/26	–	113
Σ	112/1273	183/1044	27/346	46/226	1/36	4/134	80/216	1/15	12/73	29/74	2/22	12/34	1/21	2/27	1/26	6	519

Source: Author's own compilation based on: EP, 2022a; 2022b; 2022c; HAEU, 1995a–h; 1996a–j; 1997a–j; 1998a–g; 1999a–e. The lack of MEP activity focused on the urban policy is marked in grey.

As Table 1 proves, the greatest ‘size’ is achieved by the activity of one group – it is the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (formerly Socialist Group and Party of European Socialists). The disproportion between the officially (formally) expressed interest in urban policy observed on the part of the socialists, and the MEPs of other EPPGs is clear. It is not only about such obvious differences as those that result from the analysis of the activity of, on the one hand, socialists and, on the other hand, representatives of the European Radical Alliance, European Democratic Alliance or Independence for a Europe of Nations (in each case only one activity was recorded). The advantage also concerns the activity of the MEPs of the Christian Democrats – European People’s Party (112 activities) and the left – European United Left/Nordic Green Left (80 activities).

The assumption of the relationship between the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy, and the size of EPPGs is not unreasonable. It can be assumed that larger (more numerous) EPPGs are active in more sectoral areas than smaller (less numerous) EPPGs. It is because they have more resources, experience, etc. Thus, the probability that at least some MEPs are interested in urban policy increases, while in smaller EPPGs, the probability is lower.

Considering the data presented in Table 2, it is impossible to agree with the statement that the ‘size’ of EPPGs is a factor determining this activity. As can be seen from the list, the largest ‘size’ of the representation in the EP (approximately 255 MEPs in each term) does not translate into the largest ‘size’ of MEPs activity.

Perspective of EuPPs

The multitude of challenges faced by the EU and its institutions is reflected in the activities undertaken by the EuPPs (Hix, 1996; Dorussen, Nanou, 2006; Timus, Lightfoot, 2014; Calossi, Cicchi, 2019). Considering their representations in the EP, such as EPPGs, one may be tempted to say that each EuPP formulates a response to the challenges related to the functioning of cities (cf. McElroy, Benoit, 2010).

Table 3 presents the results of the conducted study. The author was interested in the official programming documents and reports on the activities of these EuPPs, which were represented in the EP in the form of EPPGs in the years 1994–2019, i.e., between the beginning of the fourth

(1994–1999) and the end of the eighth (2014–2019) term of PE. The limited time frame of the analysis is not accidental. It results from the fact that during these five terms of office, MEPs undertook activities focused on urban policy. However, the problems of functioning of cities and their inhabitants were not, apart from a few exceptions, the subject of interest of MEPs of the first, second and third terms of office. The results of the query in HAEU confirm it.

The so-called urban issues, i.e., all types of literal references to cities and urban policies and, related to them, problems and topics of urban provenance, were the categorisation key used to analyse the content of programming documents and activity reports.

As the list shows, the author decided to take into account the two levels of analysis. The first, referred to as operational, refers to the activities that are part of the current mode of operation of the EuPPs. These are not only thematic speeches, interviews and comments made by party members but also the publications and events devoted to the so-called urban issues. The second level focuses on official documents (resolutions and declarations) related to these issues. It is worth noting that the activities carried out at the operational level are generally ‘fragmentary’, i.e., they focus on a specific problem (e.g., urban transport, urban greenery, urban recreational infrastructure, municipal school network). The documents are accompanied by a medium- to long-term perspective of thinking about cities and their inhabitants, including the role of cities in the functioning of the EU and its Member States.

As has already been indicated, all EuPPs recognise the growing importance of cities as the centres of political, economic and social life. Therefore, they respond to the related challenges. It is evidenced by the actions taken at the operational level. It should be emphasised that the two categories of activities prevail clearly. They are mainly speeches, interviews, and comments, and, secondly, the events dedicated to the so-called urban issues. Importantly, however, only one party – namely the EPP – expresses its official position on urban policy challenges. It is the ‘Smart and Green Cities’ resolution adopted on April 5, 2016 by the EPP Political Assembly.

Bearing in mind the activities dedicated to urban issues by individual EuPPs (and thus the distinguishing position of the EPP), one can risk a statement that the ‘size’ of the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy is not determined by their programme orientation. As it has been proved, even though the resolution was prepared (Table 3), the activity

Table 3

EuPPs towards urban policy – analysis of actions (1994–2019)

EuPP and their corresponding EPPGs	Operational level			Formal level (documents)
	Speeches, interviews, comments	Thematic publications (reports, briefs)	Thematic events	Resolutions, Declarations
1	2	3	4	5
European People's Party: – European People Party – European People's Party and Christian Democrats	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes [Smart and Green Cities. Resolution adopted by the EPP Political Assembly of 5 April 2016]
Party of European Socialists: – Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats – Socialist Group – Party of European Socialists	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party, European Democratic Party: – Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe – European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
European Greens, European Free Alliance, European Pirate Party, Volt Europa, Animal Politics EU: – Greens/EFA – Green	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom: – Europe of Nations and Freedom	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

1	2	3	4	5
European Conservatives and Reformists Party, European Christian Political Movement: – European Conservatives and Reformists	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
– European United Left/Nordic Green Left	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Alliance for Direct Democracy in Europe: – Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Movement for a Europe of Liberties and Democracy: – Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Alliance of Europe of Nations: – Union of Europe of the Nations	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Identity and Democracy Party: – Independence/Democracy	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
– EUDemocrats: Independence/Democracy	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
– Union of Europe*	–	–	–	–
– Forza Europa*	–	–	–	–
– European Democratic Alliance*	–	–	–	–
– European Radical Alliance*	–	–	–	–
– European United Left*	–	–	–	–
– Independence for a Europe of Nations*	–	–	–	–

Source: Author's own compilation based on: An asterisk (*) marks those EPPGs that did not represent the EuPPs.

of EPP’ MEPs is giving way to the activity of S&D’ MEPs (Table 1, Table 2).

Discussion and Conclusion

The article aimed to answer the question about the determinants of the ‘presence’ of urban policy in the EP forum. Thus, the author was interested in the factors that make MEPs undertake activities focused on urban policy. The analysis results allow for the conclusion that there is no relationship between the political affiliation of MEPs and their activity focused on urban policy. There are at least two pieces of evidence for such a conclusion.

Firstly, it is difficult to point to a relationship between the ‘size’ of EPPGs and the activity of their MEPs. It is confirmed by the example of, on the one hand, the most strongly represented EPP and, on the other, the most active S&D.

Secondly and finally, even though the EPP programme output dedicated to the so-called urban issues is the greatest, the activity of its MEPs is replaced by the activity of S&D MEPs.

The study results lead to further in-depth analyses of the determinants of the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy. In this context, it is worth indicating at least four potential directions of scientific reflection.

Firstly, it would be worth considering the formation of the Urban Agenda for the EU. In this case, it is about determining the real possibilities of MEPs’ participation in this process. For this reason, the direction of consideration may be determined by the relations between, on the one hand, EP and, on the other, EC and the Council. Table 4 is a summary of, on the one hand, the ‘links’ in the process of forming the Urban Agenda for the EU and, on the other hand, the ‘size’ of MEPs activity. As established, more than thirty documents prepared by the EC and the Council constitute the framework of the European approach to urban policy (cf. Graph 1).

Considering the list, it is difficult to indicate a clear relationship between the process of forming the Urban Agenda for the EU and the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy. The sixth term (2004–2009) indeed needs to be emphasised, i.e., the period immediately following the EU enlargement to include Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, Malta, and Cyprus. Then, the largest number of documents prepared by the EC and the Council (10) was

Table 4

The formation of the Urban Agenda for the EU and the activity of MEPs focused on urban policy (1994–2019)

EP term number	EC's and Council's documents			Number of activities of MEPs in relation to EPPGs																
	European Commission	Council of European Union	å (documents of EC and Council)	European People's Party (EPP)/European People's Party and European Democrats (EPP/ED)	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (PASD)/Socialist (SG)/Party of European Socialists (PES)	Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)/European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR)	Greens/EFA	Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF)	European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)	European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUL/NGL)	Independence for a Europe of Nations IEN)	Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD)/Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD)	Union of Europe of the Nations (UEN)	Independence/Democracy (ID)	Union of Europe	European Radical Alliance (ERA)	Forza Europa (FE)	European Democratic Alliance (EDA)	unaffiliated	Σ (activities of MEPs)
8th	5	3	8	21	24	4	9	1	3	20	–	9	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	94
7th	3	2	5	36	24	6	12	–	1	14	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	97
6th	5	5	10	16	73	8	15	–	–	22	–	–	2	2	–	–	–	–	1	139
5th	2	2	4	12	18	3	5	–	–	10	–	–	27	–	–	–	–	–	1	76
4th	1	0	1	27	?	6	5	–	–	14	1	–	–	–	12	1	2	1	–	113

Source: Author's own compilation based on: EP, 2022a; 2022b; 2022c; HAEU, 1995a–h; 1996a–j; 1997a–j; 1998a–g; 1999a–e. The lack of MEP activity focused on the urban policy is marked in light grey. The dark grey colour symbolises the relationship between the activities of the EC and the Council and the activity of the MEPs.

developed, and the highest number of activities (142) was recorded. Nevertheless, in the remaining cases – namely the fourth, fifth, seventh and eighth terms of the EP – a similar correlation does not exist.

The second direction seems to be marked by the personality and psychological determinants of the activity of MEPs. As Simonton (2014) argues, they can play a key role in assessing a specific problem and, related to it, selecting measures to solve it.

The third direction leads to the analysis of the activity of MEPs in the period preceding their assumption of office. In this case, one talks not only about previous political activity undertaken on the national forum (e.g., a member of the government, parliamentarian, local government member) but also about a social activity (e.g., as part of non-governmental organisations or social movements).

The fourth direction of research may be determined by the ‘national’ perspective of the activity of MEPs (Haughton, 2013). Initially, interest in urban policy, and consequently activity in the EP forum, is aimed at gaining the support of voters – residents of the constituency in which a given MEP runs for office.

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Deputowani do Parlamentu Europejskiego wobec polityki miejskiej – w poszukiwaniu determinantów aktywności na forum Parlamentu Europejskiego

Streszczenie

Artykuł porusza problematykę „obecności” polityki miejskiej na forum Parlamentu Europejskiego (PE) w latach 1994–2019. Badanie oparte na analizie dokumentów zarówno PE, jak i europejskich partii politycznych pozwala na stwierdzenie, że przynależność polityczna deputowanych nie determinuje ich aktywności ukierunkowanej na politykę miejską. Trudno zatem uchwycić związek między tego typu aktywnością a faktem przynależności deputowanych do określonej frakcji w PE, „wielkością” (liczbą członków) frakcji w PE, czy też wreszcie działaniami europejskich partii politycznych poświęconymi polityce miejskiej. Rezultaty badania skłaniają do poszukiwania innych uwarunkowań aktywności deputowanych.

Słowa kluczowe: Agenda Miejska UE, polityka miejska, deputowani do Parlamentu Europejskiego, frakcje w Parlamencie Europejskim, europejskie partie polityczne

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