



EU Integration in Practice: Reporting on the European Union

ABC of EU Affairs Journalist | EU Crises in the Media | Case studies | Creating an EU Public | Presentations

February 26th - March 1, University of Florida, Gainesville, US

Instructor: Robert Lupițu (journalist, Editor-in-Chief CaleaEuropeana.ro, Romania)



Is the End Near of False Alarm? EU Crises in the media

“Welcome to the European Union, where for every crisis we have a summit”

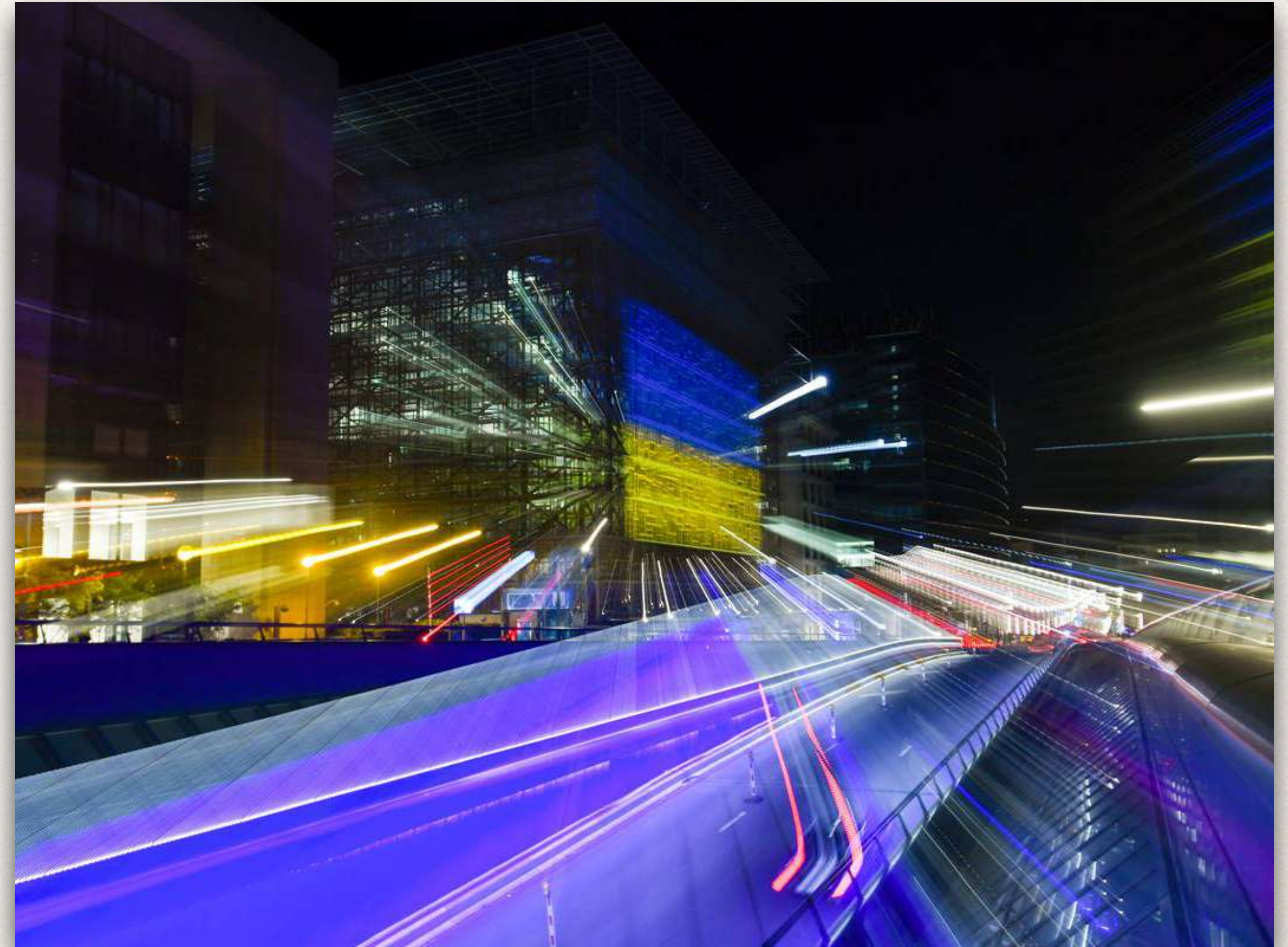
Different EU Crises on the media and how they've been reported



Different EU Crises on the media and how they've been reported



Different EU Crises on the media and how they've been reported



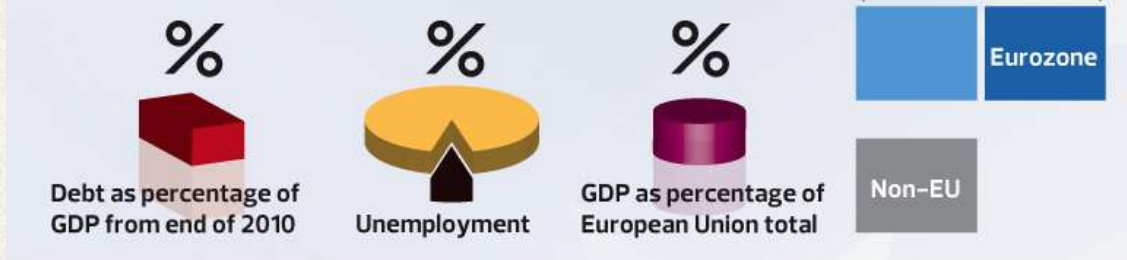
Ice-breaking questions

- ❖ How do you choose outlets that you read, listen or see?
- ❖ Based on what criteria do you select your information and how do you process it?
- ❖ What are the latest evolutions and developments about the EU that you know about?

The Eurozone Crisis

- ❖ Beginning at the end of 2009, the Eurozone debt crisis saw several member states, including Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain (PIIGS), facing severe economic challenges;
- ❖ These challenges were characterised by high levels of public debt, banking sector instability, and recession.
- ❖ Media coverage focused on bailout negotiations, austerity measures, and the broader implications for the stability of the euro currency and the EU.

KEY



FRANCE

81.7% 9.9% 15.9%

With France holding the rotating presidency of the G20 and G8, Nicolas Sarkozy's low poll ratings at home and an economic and banking crisis in Paris, the Elysée is staking a lot on the forthcoming summits. At the start of France's G20 presidency, Sarkozy wanted big deals on more regulation, a tax on financial transactions and more 'morality' in capitalism. Now he knows that without a plan to solve the eurozone debt crisis while hanging on to France's AAA rating, all other moves are stymied. He has been deliberately tight-lipped over his aims and his meetings with Merkel this weekend. The French finance ministry has downplayed suggestions of a rift between Paris and Berlin over recapitalising the banks, saying it wants European coordination on recapitalisation. France has seemed to favour using European stability funds, the EFSF mechanism, for this, but Germany wants those funds only to be used as a last resort. Paris has not commented on the extent to which the French banks may or may not need help.

SPAIN

60.1% 21.2% 8.7%

Like Italy, too big to fail if the euro is to survive in its present form. Spain needs the next series of meetings to help erect a firewall around both it and Italy to protect them from a Greek default and ease pressure on their sovereign debt. It hastily changed its constitution over the summer in order to bring in the 'golden rule' deficit cap that Germany and France have urged eurozone countries to put in place. The Spanish hope that an obedient attitude to EU demands - which includes harsh deficit-slashing measures expected to tip it into a double-dip recession - will encourage Germany to accept greater economic and fiscal integration in the eurozone - allowing Spain to enjoy German-style bond yields.

ITALY

119.0% 7.9% 12.6%

Italy's credit rating was downgraded again by Fitch on Friday. All the participants in this week's summit know that the euro will struggle to survive a meltdown in Rome. Beleaguered prime minister Silvio Berlusconi will be seeking to impress his European peers with a forthcoming decree promoting economic development, but it won't be easy. Domestically, the plan for growth has been treated with derision in some quarters. Italian daily La Repubblica described it as a 'mirage'. Reports that the government is considering an amnesty for tax evaders in the decree has also provoked howls of protest from the opposition. Italy has a long way to go to appease the markets.

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, BRUSSELS

The commission views the debt crisis as an opportunity for closer ties between countries. If the end result is a tighter bond through shared debts and greater powers for EU institutions, then many in Brussels will cheer the outcome. But so far the commission has been forced to take a backseat, with most of the decision-making, or lack thereof, taking place in the council of ministers. Commission president José Manuel Barroso's only meaningful, impassioned contribution to the debate so far was to promote eurobonds as a key instrument in sharing the burden of debts with Greece.

FINLAND

48.4% 7.8% 1.5%

Finland is emerging as a thorn in the side of those desperate to do a deal. The Finns last week secured an agreement from Greece that it would put up collateral against the Finnish share of the latest Greek bailout. Helsinki's insistence on receiving security from Athens was a condition of Jutta Urpilainen's Social Democratic Party when they agreed to join the governing coalition earlier this year. But more radical parties told parliament last week that it would have been better if the country had refused to take part in the rescue plan altogether. That's likely to make Finland wary of agreeing to any radical extension of the powers of the bailout fund, the EFSF, let alone any guarantee to back support measures, if other countries come under attack from the bond markets.

GERMANY

83.2% 6.0% 20.4%

Despite being easily Europe's most powerful politician, Angela Merkel has the biggest problems as the continent's leaders head into a few weeks of potentially decisive summits. Merkel has repeatedly said that she wants to maintain the status quo and delay any new solution for the eurozone until the planned permanent mechanism for fixing eurozone problems comes into force in 2013. This stance shores up her weak domestic political position where German public opinion is firmly against any more bailouts. But Germany has too much to lose by letting the single currency disintegrate. The political classes know it must be saved at all costs and privately admit that a solution can't wait until 2013. Merkel must try to prepare the public for what it doesn't want to hear and must work out a way to escape from the summitry with her 2013 re-election prospects still intact.

SLOVAKIA

41.0% 13.4% 0.5%

Remarkably, Slovakia has emerged as a key player in the crisis. On Tuesday, the Slovak parliament reconvenes with the fate of the eurozone's existing bailout plans in its hands. How a nation with less than 1% stake in the bailout fund came to be in such a position is perhaps the most bizarre twist of the euro saga. It owes its pivotal role to the fact that it will be the last of the 17 eurozone members to vote on reforms to the EFSF. Prime minister Iveta Radicova is desperately trying to ensure that she doesn't get the blame for capsizing the reforms but the vote is finely balanced, with her free-market coalition partner, Richard Sulik, leader of the splendidly named SaS, holding the key. Most think the Slovaks will vote yes next week but Radicova is unwell and has lost her voice. Whether this is because she's spent so long trying to talk round Mr Sulik is not clear.

GREECE

142.8% 16.7% 1.9%

For Greece, the country at the centre of the debt crisis, the single biggest priority this week is securing enough cash to cover vital public sector payments in the coming weeks. Prime Minister George Papandreou's government has embarked on a race against the clock to enact economic and structural reforms in return for an €8bn aid instalment that the EU and IMF have so far refused to release. Disbursement depends on a review of the headway the country has made financially. "There are still important issues that need to be discussed," said the IMF mission chief Poul Thomsen, referring to the report on Friday. "Hopefully, we will conclude positively soon, but we are not there yet." The government has admitted that it will run out of cash by mid-November. Papandreou says enforcement of decisions reached at an EU summit in July, under which Athens will receive a second package of rescue funds, is also a priority once all 17 members of the eurozone ratify the newly expanded EFSF. Both the EU and IMF say the bailout, originally set at €109bn, will need to be re-negotiated in light of Greece missing fiscal targets since July.

THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK, FRANKFURT

A Greek bailout financed by recapitalised euro banks, with real money provided by happy flag-waving EU taxpayers: that is the ideal outcome for the European Central Bank. The last thing incoming president Mario Draghi wants in his first weeks in charge is for the ECB to be forced to rescue all the sickly players in the debt drama because governments refuse to spend taxpayers' cash. His predecessor, Jean-Claude Trichet, helped a little by opening a year-long loan window for struggling banks, but that move was predicated on governments fashioning a large-scale bailout.

Greek Bailout Referendum question

- ❖ It asked Greeks to approve or reject the specific terms laid out by Greece's creditors: "Should the agreement plan submitted by the European Commission, European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund to the Eurogroup and consisting of two parts, which form their single proposal, be accepted?"
- ❖ The first document is titled "Reforms for the completion of the Current Program and Beyond" and the second "Preliminary Debt sustainability Analysis."
- ❖ "Not approved/NO (61,31%)
- ❖ Approved/YES" (38,69%)

Greece debt talks: EU chief feels 'betrayed'

🕒 29 June 2015



European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker: "In one night Europe suffered a major blow"

The European Commission chief, Jean-Claude Juncker, has said he feels "betrayed" by the "egotism" shown by Greece in failed debt talks.

He said Greek proposals were "delayed" or "deliberately altered" but added the door was still open to talks.

Along with several other European leaders, he has urged a yes vote in the snap referendum called for Sunday.

How the Eurozone Crisis Ended

- ❖ The role of the ECB: restoring confidence the Euro currency and stabilising markets through interest rates cuts, liquidity injections;
- ❖ Bailout Programmes: The (In)Famous Troika (loans conditioned by heavy reforms);
- ❖ The European Stability Mechanism: A permanent rescue fund set up in 2012 to provide loans to financially distressed euro area countries. A financial power up to 500 billions euros, with 80 billions capital and 420 billions that can be loaned through bonds (obligations) issued on capital markets;

NEWS > DEFENSE

Greece exits bailout monitoring, but austerity pain lingers

While European Commission celebrates, Athens still struggles with weaknesses that have weighed on growth for decades.

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POLITICO PRO

Free article usually reserved for subscribers




Greece's government and creditors are touting the exit from bailout monitoring as the end of a dark era | Louisa

Gouliamaki/AFP via Getty Images

The Migration Crisis

- ❖ Peaked in 2015, the migration crisis saw a large influx of refugees and migrants from conflict-affected zones in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia seeking asylum in Europe;
- ❖ Media coverage highlighted the humanitarian challenges, political debates over immigration policy, and tensions within the EU over burden-sharing and border control measures, with a particular focus on Angela's Merkel leadership and the rise of far-right extremists parties. There were also links between migratory flows and terrorist attacks in Western Europe;

“We can do this!” / “Wir schaffen das!”

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SOCIETY

'We can do this!' — Merkel's words five years on

Peter Hille

In 2015 German Chancellor Angela Merkel uttered her famous quote about taking in refugees. Today the numbers show that integration has made progress, though skepticism persists.

[f](#) [X](#) [v](#)



© picture-alliance/dpa/Bernd von Jutrczenka
Image: picture-alliance/dpa/Bernd von Jutrczenka

The start of the 2015 refugee crisis was a time of caution for some, while for others it was a time of fear and uncertainty.

Where do these people come from? Do they have a good education? Will they find jobs, an apartment?

[Read more: How a Syrian family built a new life in Germany](#)

These and many other questions were hotly debated in Germany when more and more refugees came into the country in summer 2015 and German chancellor Angela Merkel expressed her optimism in the simple words "We can do this!" in a press conference held on August 31 of that year.

How it ended (or not)?

- ❖ The crisis has not ended completely, but there were steps taken like EU - Turkey Agreement (2016), closure of migration routes and humanitarian assistance to countries of origin or other countries outside the EU;
- ❖ The global pandemic reduced the inflows because of restrictions;
- ❖ Spot on: Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) - a network of frontline practitioners that exchange knowledge and to prevent and counter violent extremism (anti-racism, islamophobia, anti-semitism).
- ❖ Issues remaining: integration of migrants and refugees
- ❖ EU Migration policies... (next slide)

New Pact on Migration and Asylum of the EU (agreed in December 2023!!!)

The agreement covers five key proposals of the Pact:

- Screening Regulation: Creating uniform rules concerning the identification of non-EU nationals upon their arrival, thus increasing the security within the Schengen area.
- Eurodac Regulation: Developing a common database gathering more accurate and complete data to detect unauthorised movements.
- Asylum Procedures Regulation: Making asylum, return and border procedures quicker and more effective.
- Asylum Migration Management Regulation: Establishing a new solidarity mechanism amongst Member States to balance the current system, where a few countries are responsible for the vast majority of asylum applications, and clear rules on responsibility for asylum applications.
- Crisis and Major Force Regulation: Ensuring that the EU is prepared in the future to face situations of crisis, including instrumentalisation of migrants.

[my.europe](#) > Europe News

EU countries need to curb irregular migration to prevent far-right surge, says Manfred Weber

By [Jorge Liboreiro](#)

Published on 29/11/2023 - 15:51 • Updated 13/12/2023 - 17:42

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The next elections to the European Parliament risk unleashing a far-right surge if governments are unable to prove they can manage migration, Manfred Weber has warned.

"People want to see results. And that means, practically speaking, we have to lower the number of irregular arrivals," the leader of the centre-right European People's Party (EPP) said on Wednesday morning.

COUNCIL OF THE EU

ENGLISH

"A day that will remain in the history of the EU": the Council and the European Parliament reached an agreement on the Pact for migration and asylum, a key agreement for the extension of Schengen with Romania and Bulgaria



Published 2 months ago Mr December 20, 2023

By [Robert Lupițu](#)

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29
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"I welcome the historic agreement on the Migration and Asylum Pact. Congratulations to the European Parliament and the Council for agreeing on this landmark proposal of this mandate. I thank Margaritis Schinas (no – Vice-President of the European Commission) and Ylva Johansson (no – European Commissioner for Home Affairs) for their tireless efforts," Ursula von der Leyen wrote on Twitter.

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ROMANIA / 1 hour ago

Nicolae Ciucă: PNRR is the instrument through which Romania must succeed in a real green offensive

PRESS RELEASES / 2 hours ago

The most used work of the previous decade: Brexit

- ❖ The United Kingdom's decision to leave the EU, known as Brexit, triggered an unprecedented situation.
- ❖ Media coverage of Brexit encompassed UK-EU negotiations between the UK, debates in the British Parliament, broader implications for trade, security, and the future of the EU (spill-over effect?).

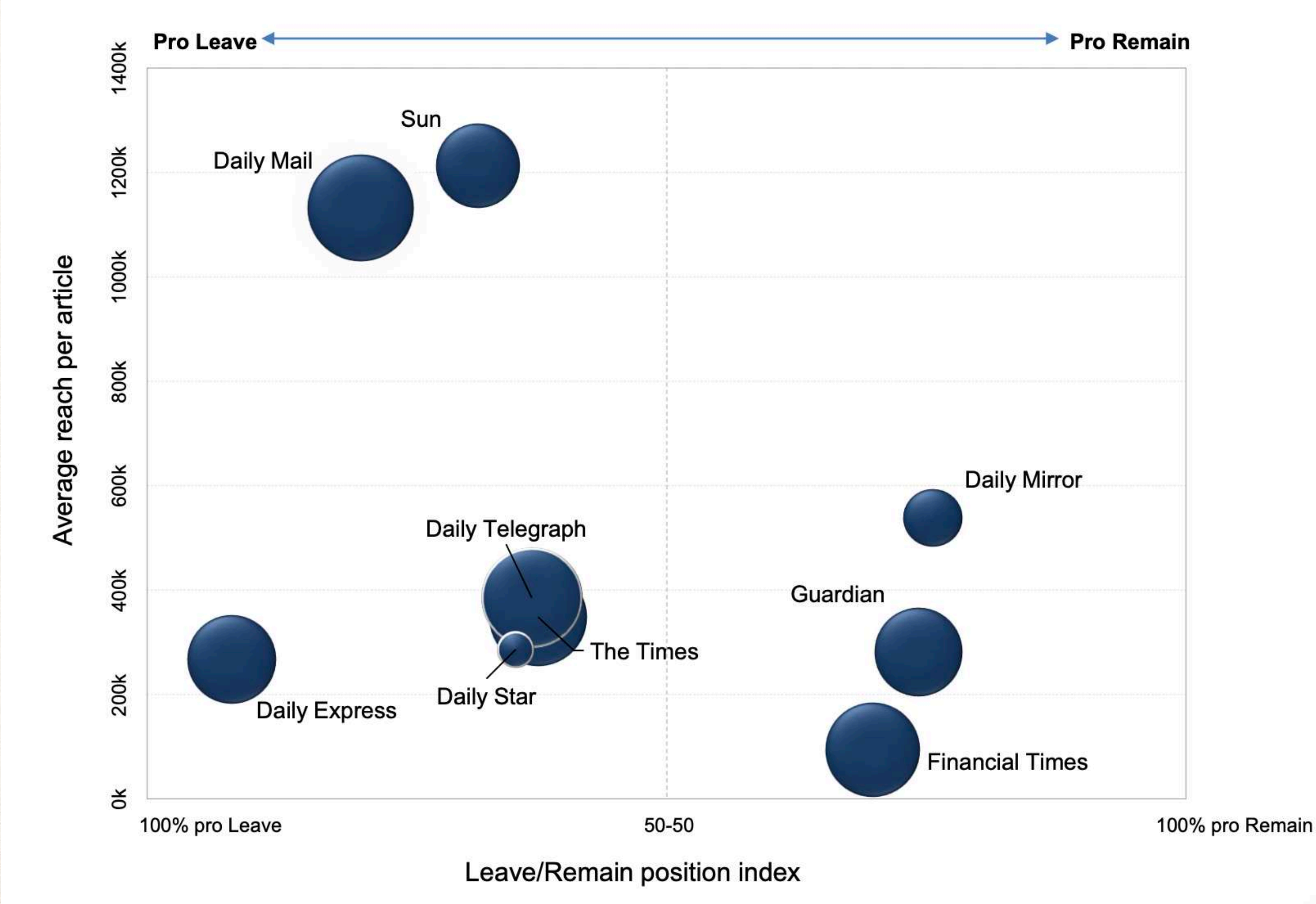
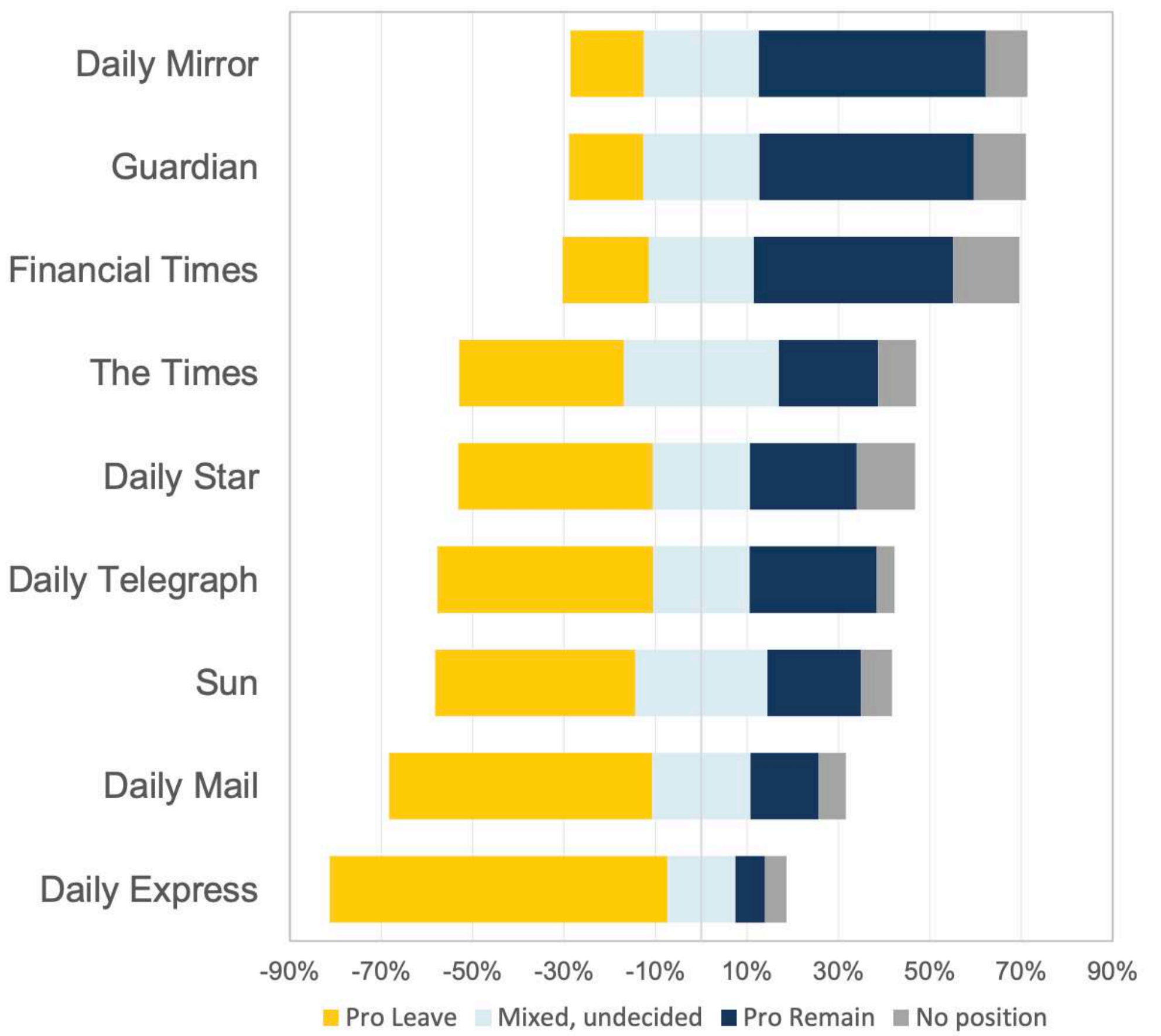
Brexit timeline

- ❖ June 23, 2016 - The Brexit process began with a referendum in which UK citizens voted to leave the EU by a narrow margin of 51.9% to 48.1% (Approx. 17 to 16 millions votes);
- ❖ March 29, 2017 - The UK government formally triggered the Article 50 of TEU, initiating the withdrawal process;
- ❖ October 17, 2019 - The Withdrawal agreement that outlined arrangements for the UK's financial obligations, citizens' rights, and the Irish border, among other issues;
- ❖ By January 31, 2020 - The agreement was ratified by the UK Parliament and the European Parliament;
- ❖ 2020 - A whole year of transition period while the UK still adhered to EU rules;
- ❖ From 2021 - A Trade and Cooperation Agreement governs the relationship between EU and UK;


Brexit: Feeling the power of the media



Insightful charts (Reuters Institute)



A view (not necessarily the position of the EU)



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Council of the European Union

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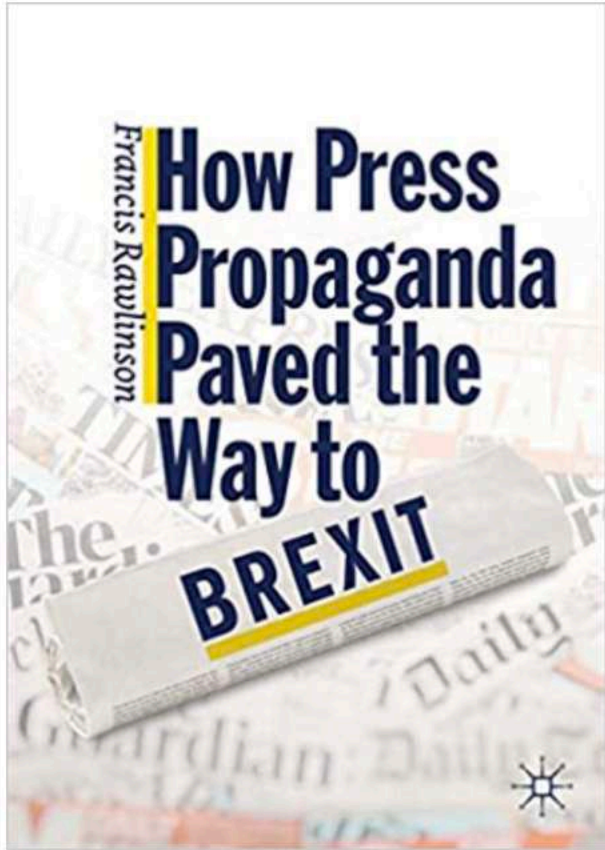
› Foreign affairs & international relations (135)

'How Press Propaganda Paved the Way to Brexit', by Francis Rawlinson

28 September 2020

[Reading suggestion](#)

gsclibrary



The groundwork for the Leave campaign in the UK's 2016 EU referendum had already been laid over the course of several decades by a highly Eurosceptic press. So argues Francis Rawlinson in 'How Press Propaganda Paved the Way to Brexit'.

In this extensively researched book, Rawlinson examines the role of right-wing newspapers in shaping British public opinion about the EU, not only in the run-up to the 2016 referendum but also in the decades preceding it. Rawlinson's core argument is that press propaganda helped tip the scales in favour of a Leave vote. He posits that over time, a consistent flow of misinformation from the press caused Eurosceptic attitudes to take root among a large part of the British population, furthering the political agenda of opponents of EU membership and creating a receptive audience for the Leave campaign's messages.

To present his argument, Rawlinson structures his book in three parts. Part I sets out some fundamental background information and introduces the core thesis. Following a detailed description of the British media landscape, Rawlinson defines 'propaganda' as '[r]elentless, long-term biased reporting, or misinformation, about something, someone or somewhere', and sets out why he believes that reporting on the EU by much of the British press fits that definition. He argues that decades of selective reporting and distortion of the facts to suit a Eurosceptic narrative 'primed [...] readers to vote against Europe in a referendum'.

European Media take on Brexit

English

euronews.

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Post-Brexit Guide: What's been the impact — and how did it happen?



By Alasdair Sanford

Published on 29/12/2022 - 07:00 • Updated 10/03/2023 - 18:11

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Euronews' updated explainer examines the far-reaching effects of the UK's departure from the EU and the events that led to Brexit.

This updated article was previously titled "Post-Brexit Guide: Where are we now — and how did we get here?".

The effects of the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union have been far-reaching, impacting business and the economy, as well as people on both sides of the English Channel and many aspects of their lives.

Failing in being impartial: Bias? Opinions?

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Sun 27 Oct 2019 13:59 CET

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This article is more than 4 years old

Brexit bias? BBC faces a difficult balancing act in polarised nation

Roy Greenslade



There has been a marked rise in complaints as the corporation tries its best to remain impartial



Political editor Laura Kuenssberg is among those that the journalist Peter Osborne has taken to task over the BBC's Brexit coverage. Photograph: Jeff Overs/BBC

M

edia bias is always in the eyes of the beholder. So, on one side, those who support leaving the EU regard the BBC as the Brussels Broadcasting Corporation. Those who seek to remain, meanwhile, view it as the **Brexit** Broadcasting Corporation.

This is familiar ground for Britain's major public service broadcaster. Think back to the Troubles, the Falklands war, the Scottish independence referendum. In each case, the **BBC** was accused of failing to be impartial.

This time, however, the attacks pose a more profound challenge. At a time when fewer and fewer people believe what they are told by journalists, **the BBC is struggling to convince its audience that it is not subject to sinister influences.** The public's media savviness has gradually elided into media

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MAREA BRITANIE

Un arc peste timp în presa britanică. 1 ianuarie 1973: "Europa venim!" / 1 februarie 2020: "Am făcut Brexit-ul!"

Published 4 years ago on February 1, 2020
By **Robert Lupițu** 

[illegible]

359 Share

Regatul Unit al Marii Britanii și Irlandei de Nord a devenit astăzi, 1 februarie 2020, primul stat membru din istorie care se retrage din Uniunea Europeană, în ceea ce este tratat drept "divorțul și momentului secolului". După 47 de ani de apartenență la comunitatea europeană, începută la 1 ianuarie 1973, și după trei ani și jumătate de la referendumul privind Brexit, Marea Britanie a ieșit din UE, începând perioada de tranziție, care se încheie la 31 decembrie 2020, timp în care se vor aplica în continuare normele europene.


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British war veterans mourn Brexit in poignant message projected onto Dover cliffs: "This is our star. Take care of her for us"

Published 4 years ago Mr February 1, 2020
By **Robert Lupițu**



© Led By Donkeys/ Twitter (free photo for media)

1.1K Share

British war veterans expressed their disappointment over their country's exit from the European Union on Saturday in a video message projected onto the White Cliffs of Dover, on the English coast near France, and shared on Twitter by the Led By page Donkeys, reports [Agerpres](#) .

"I'm really depressed about the idea of us leaving Europe because it meant so much to me."

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100% GARANȚIE

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Follow-up questions

- ✦ What have you observed in the way media covers EU crises?
- ✦ What differences have you spotted?

EU Institutional Communication and Transparency

Inside the Press Rooms



Ice-breaking questions

- ❖ What does the EU aim when it communicates to the public?

EU Communication: Overcoming the “Brussels Buble”

- ❖ Objectives: to inform citizens, to engage with stakeholders, to promote EU values and achievements, to enhance credibility, to counter misinformation
- ❖ Channels (instruments): own websites, press releases, press briefings, own broadcasting feeds, own photo-video materials, social media
- ❖ Messaging styles: transparent, relevant, coordination and alignment, dialogue with stakeholders and citizens

Overarching goal: to promote transparency and accountability in order to generate engagement and get legitimacy and effectiveness of EU policies;

Exiting the bubble by touching base with citizens



Journalist takeaways from “inside/ outside the press rooms”

- ❖ Trust (like really), but verify (the devil is within the details);
- ❖ Build working relations with spokespersons, press officers, Commissioners assistants, MEPs assistants (go grab even a coffee with them);
- ❖ Take part to background (technical) meetings;
- ❖ Learn the way they pick journalists for Q&A sessions;
- ❖ The appreciate direct dialogue and tough, but informed, questions;
- ❖ Be aware of the “nationalising success and Europeanising failure” and the other way around;
- ❖ Advance further in your news than “EU PR”;

Reporting from the outside: International coverage of the EU



Reporting from the outside: US media coverage of the EU

The EU is facing the most serious crises in its history. Many are wondering if anyone's really in charge



Analysis by [Luke McGee](#), CNN

🕒 8 minute read · Published 12:00 AM EST, Sun February 14, 2021



President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen arrives at the Europa building in Brussels in December. John Thys/Pool/AFP/Getty Images

(CNN) — The year is only six weeks old, but 2021 is already revealing the [European Union's inherent limitations](#).

[While the EU is no stranger to crises](#), the past few weeks have thrown up issues that highlight the chasm between the grand ambition of Brussels and its capability.

Reporting from the outside: US media coverage of the EU

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Politics

EU's New Defense Plan Aims to Boost European Military Purchases

- The European Commission is set to unveil a new strategy
- The commission paper will be unveiled in the coming weeks

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Russia Buys Tens of Millions of Euros of Banned EU Weapons Tech

- Tens of millions of euros in restricted goods shipped from EU
- Company subsidiaries, third countries moved sensitive items

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Politics

Macron's Ambiguity on Ukraine Backfires as Allies Balk at Troops

- The French president refused to rule out sending troops
- Russia warned that NATO soldiers would escalate a conflict



Emmanuel Macron speaks during a press conference in Paris on Feb. 26. *Photographer: Gonzalo Fuentes/AFP/Getty Images*

FRANCE

Sending European troops to Ukraine remains an option, says French President Emmanuel Macron

Macron made the comments as some 20 European leaders gathered in Paris to show a unified front against the Kremlin

By **Michael Dorgan** · Fox News

Published February 27, 2024 7:14am EST

Reporting from the outside: US media coverage of the EU

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

WAR IN UKRAINE

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With U.S. aid in doubt, Europe struggles to rearm Ukraine

European defense manufacturers are racing to produce artillery and other weapons Kyiv needs. But they may come too late.

By [Missy Ryan](#) and [Emily Rauhala](#)

February 24, 2024 at 3:29 p.m. EST

Reporting from the outside: Candidate countries media coverage of the EU

- ❖ Several layers and angles of reporting:
 - Interest in accession process and negotiation progress;
 - Coverage of EU funds and financing programs;
 - Analysis of EU policies, values and standards;
 - Debate on EU enlargement;
 - Monitoring EU institutions and enlargement process;

Check-out

- ✦ What are your main takeaways from today's class?



THANK YOU!

February 26th - March 1, University of Florida, Gainesville, US
Instructor: Robert Lupițu (journalist, Editor-in-Chief CaleaEuropeana.ro, Romania)