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Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
Integrating Diversity in the European Union (InDivEU)

The Politics of Differentiated Integration: What do
Governments Want? Country Report - Italy

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Integrating Diversity in the European Union (InDivEU) is a Horizon 2020 funded research project aimed at contributing concretely to the current debate on the 'Future of Europe' by assessing, developing and testing a range of models and scenarios for different levels of integration among EU member states. InDivEU begins from the assumption that managing heterogeneity and deep diversity is a continuous and growing challenge in the evolution of the EU and the dynamic of European integration.

The objective of InDivEU is to maximize the knowledge of Differentiated Integration (DI) on the basis of a theoretically robust conceptual foundations accompanied by an innovative and integrated analytical framework, and to provide Europe's policy makers with a knowledge hub on DI. InDivEU combines rigorous academic research with the capacity to translate research findings into policy design and advice.

InDivEU comprises a consortium of 14 partner institutions coordinated by the Robert Schuman Centre at the European University Institute, where the project is hosted by the European Governance and Politics Programme (EGPP). The scientific coordinators of InDivEU are Brigid Laffan (Robert Schuman Centre) and Frank Schimmelfennig (ETH Zürich).

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**Integrating
Diversity in the
European Union**

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Abstract

The analysis of how differentiated integration is discussed in Italian politics returned two clear results. Firstly, the topic is not very salient in the period of time considered (2002-2020) and there is no clear trend overtime. Saliency peaked around specific key events such as Treaty changes (2004-2005: Constitution, 2007-2008: Lisbon) and debates on the future of Europe (2016-2019). Secondly, despite the low saliency of the issue, Italian governments appear to hold a clear and coherent position on this issue. Italy supports the multi-end DI model and favours tools such as enhanced co-operation. In particular, after Brexit, Italian governments saw this tool as the solution to keep the EU together while moving forward with the integration process and keeping Italy in 'core Europe.' On the contrary, a multi-speed Europe is strongly opposed by Italian politicians, who fear that their country might be among those left behind if such a model of integration is implemented.

Keywords

Differentiated integration, Multi-End Europe, Enhanced co-operation, Two-Speed Europe, Core Europe.

Summary of Results

I. Salience

The salience analyses show that differentiated integration (DI) was a low salience issue in Italy between 2004 and 2020. Two key findings emerged. First, there is no clear trend over time, as salience peaked around specific key events such as Treaty changes (2004-2005: Constitution, 2007-2008: Lisbon) and debates on the future of Europe (2016-2019). Second, most references to DI were related to a specific DI model (multi-end Europe, and in particular to the concept of ‘core Europe’) and a precise DI mechanism (i.e. enhanced co-operation). Parliamentary debates were usually the arena for discussions on DI. By contrast, references to DI in government programmes, prime minister speeches and European Council statements were rarer.

II. Position

The position of Italian governments on DI is deeply influenced by Italy’s historical involvement in the process of European integration and, at the same time, by a fear that Italian interests are not well protected by the EU institutions. The analysis of parliamentary debates clearly shows Italy’s willingness to be fully involved in the future of European integration as long as the country’s role remains central. It is for this reason that both governing and opposition parties speak in favourable terms about the multi-end DI model and the enhanced co-operation DI mechanism. In particular, after Brexit, Italian governments saw this tool as the solution to keep the EU together while moving forward with the integration process and keeping Italy in ‘core Europe.’ At the same time, the multi-speed DI model is strongly opposed by Italian politicians, and in particular by opposition parties. A two-speed Europe is seen as a very unequal and unjust project that would leave Italy behind.

Table of Contents

1) <i>Introduction</i>	1
2) <i>The salience of DI</i>	2
2.1 <i>Government programmes</i>	2
2.2 <i>Prime minister speeches</i>	2
2.3 <i>Parliamentary debates</i>	3
2.4 <i>European Council statements</i>	7
3) <i>The governments' positions on DI</i>	8
3.1 <i>Quantitative overview of government positions</i>	8
3.2 <i>Qualitative assessment of government positions</i>	10
3.2.1 <i>The governments' positions</i>	10
3.2.2 <i>The opposition's position</i>	13
<i>Appendices</i>	22

List of Figures

Figure 1 - The salience of conceptual key words (DI models) in parliamentary debates.....	3
Figure 2 - The salience of conceptual key words in parliamentary debates – relative to the FOE debate	4
Figure 3 - The salience of DI mechanisms in parliamentary debates	5
Figure 4 - The salience of instances of enhanced co-operation in parliamentary debates.....	5
Figure 5 - The salience of opt-out policy fields in parliamentary debates	6
Figure 6 - The salience of instances of inter se agreements into DI instances 2004-2020 (n=392)	7
Figure 7 - The salience of instances of external association agreements in parliamentary debates	7
Figure 8 - The salience of conceptual key words in council statements	8
Figure 9 - Position on multi-end Europe (core Europe)	9
Figure 10 - Position on multi-speed Europe (two-speed + multi-speed).....	9
Figure 11 - Position on enhanced co-operation	10
Figure 12 - Position on DI instances (differentiated policies).....	16

1. Introduction

This report investigates the salience of differentiated integration (DI) in Italian government discourse between 2004 and 2019. It also probes into the position of Italian governments on the issue of DI in selected peak-salience years (2008, 2012, 2017-2020).

The report distinguishes three levels of abstraction in the government discourse on DI. **First**, two different models of DI are distinguished at the conceptual level. On the one hand, the ‘multi-speed EU’ model depicts DI as a temporary phenomenon and implies that all the Member States (MSs) will ultimately reach the same level of integration. On the other hand, the ‘multi-end EU’ model depicts DI as a potentially permanent feature of European integration. In this model, the MSs do not necessarily strive to reach similar levels of integration. Instead, each MS can ‘pick and choose’ to adjust its own level of integration to national preferences and capacities. **Second**, the analysis focuses on DI mechanisms. On the one hand, the enhanced co-operation mechanism allows a limited group of MSs – under certain conditions – to pursue deeper integration without having to involve all the MSs. On the other hand, the ‘opt-out’ mechanism allows MS to refrain from participating in common policies. In short, enhanced co-operation allows a MS to integrate more than other MSs, while ‘opt-outs’ allow a Member State to integrate less than other MSs. **Finally**, the analysis looks at various instances of differentiated policies and policy fields. A total of twenty-one instances are included in the analysis. They are grouped in four different categories: (a) instances of enhanced co-operation, (b) instances of opt-out policy fields, (c) instances of inter se agreements and (d) instances of external agreements. Inter se agreements are agreements which EU Member States conclude outside the framework of the European Union. External agreements are agreements between the EU and non-EU states.

The results are based on an analysis of various government documents (Appendix 1). Six document categories were selected to cover a broad spectrum of venues and government actors. From the more abstract-programmatic to the more specific, the report looks at what government programmes say about DI, at what prime ministers say about DI and at parliamentary debates on DI. The material analysed includes government programmes, prime minister speeches, prime minister European Council statements and parliamentary debates, which were analysed in this order. Appendix 1 provides an overview of all the documents analysed.

The salience of DI models, DI mechanisms and DI instances is assessed by counting key words in the above-mentioned documents. The assumption is that the more a government talks about DI, the more relevant it is. Appendix 2 shows the Italian equivalents used to search for the key words in the Italian parliamentary archive. The main problem encountered in the search was that sometimes the Italian translations of key phrases are very technical and/or the expressions are extremely long. Therefore, all the key phrases were searched for both in their long versions and with their acronyms. When the official translation included a reference to Europe (e.g. Future of Europe), then also the same label accompanied by ‘Union’ was queried (e.g. Future of the Union/Future of the European Union).

While key word counts in government programmes and PM speeches show the salience of DI at specific moments in time, the analysis of parliamentary debates allows us to identify trends over time and situational peaks. To enhance the reliability of the findings, the key word counts were triangulated with a close reading of selected key documents. Regarding the government’s position, the results are based on a manual attitude analysis of parliamentary debates. To this end, references to DI key words in parliamentary debates were manually coded as negative, neutral or positive. The second section of the report details the results of the salience analysis. The third section details the results of the position analysis.

2. The salience of DI

To assess the salience of DI in Italian government discourse, three levels of abstraction – DI models, DI mechanisms, DI instances – were distinguished. A range of methods (i.e. computer-assisted word counts, manual word counts, close reading) were employed to assess the degree to which and at what level of abstraction DI was referred to in (a) government programmes, (b) prime minister speeches, (c) prime minister European Council statements and (d) parliamentary debates. The analysis proceeded from the more general (i.e. government programmes) to the more specific (i.e. Council statements/parliamentary debates).

2.1 Government programmes

In a first step, Italian government programmes from 2001 to 2019 were analysed to gauge the salience of DI with regard to domestic political visions. Government programmes are not so common in Italian politics, especially given that often governing coalitions are formed after elections (and parties that are part of these coalitions sometimes run against each other in elections). Of the ten different cabinets that ruled during the period of time considered, only five had proper government programmes, specifically: Berlusconi II (2001-2006), Prodi II (2006-2008), Berlusconi IV (2008-2011), Conte I (2018) and Conte II (2019).¹ The computer-assisted word count analysis showed that government programmes do not refer to any of the key words associated with DI models or to specific DI instances. Moreover, government programmes contained only very limited references to DI mechanisms (enhanced co-operation/opt-outs): enhanced co-operation was only mentioned in the 2006 programme.

To evaluate whether Italian governments actually did not debate DI in their government programmes or whether the key words did not capture existing references to DI, two additional analyses were conducted. First, computer-assisted word count analysis was used to assess whether governments refer to EU-related issues at all in their programmes. This analysis showed that ‘EU’-related issues were only marginally discussed compared to other issues, such as economic and cultural issues (Appendix 3). The qualitative analysis of the government programmes returned a similar picture, as DI was never mentioned, with perhaps the exception of the very long 2006 programme (more than 250 pages) in which the left-wing coalition called for deeper European integration and for Italy to have a central role in this process.

2.2 Prime minister speeches

In the next step, various types of prime minister speeches in different contexts and venues were analysed. To begin with, the first speeches of new prime ministers after the appointment of a new cabinet and the subsequent parliamentary debates were analysed to assess whether DI is a salient political issue in the domestic arena. First speeches, in which prime ministers present their goals and vision, are an important source in the Italian context given the aforementioned lack of election programmes. The word count analysis showed no use of DI key words and very limited references to EU-related issues. Nevertheless, as Appendix 4 shows, references to the EU have increased over time.

Similarly, the analysis of the two prime ministers’ speeches (in July 2003 by Silvio Berlusconi and in July 2014 by Matteo Renzi) in the European parliament on the occasion of taking over the presidency of the Council of the European Union showed no use of DI key words. However, unsurprisingly, EU-related issues appeared with high frequency. Giuseppe Conte’s speech on the future of Europe in February 2019 was also included in the analysis, but the results are comparable to those obtained for the

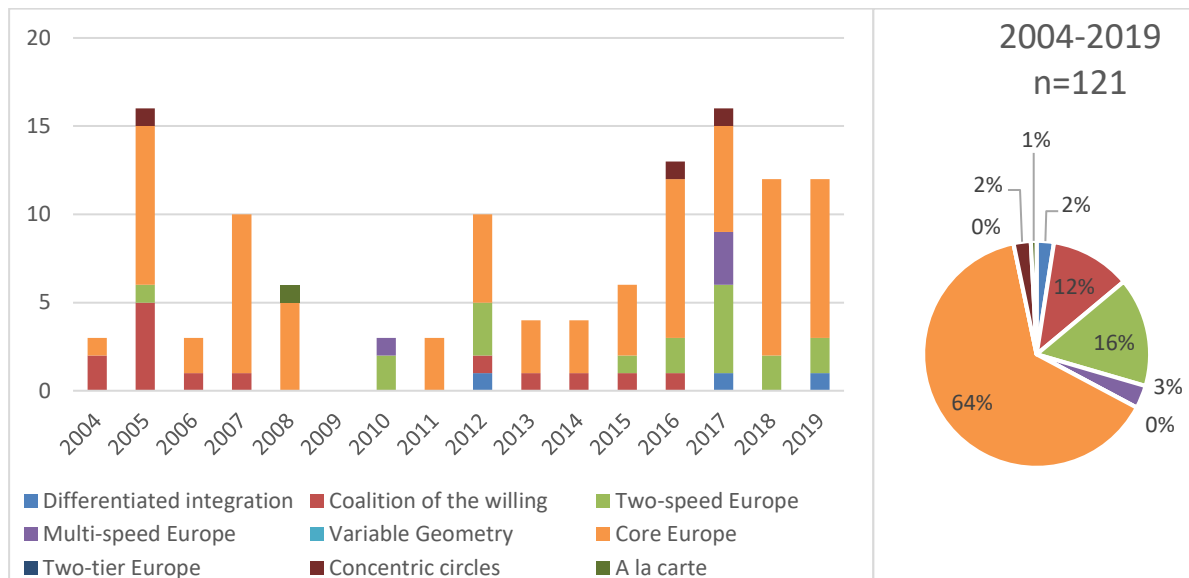
¹ The following cabinets are instead missing: Monti (2011-2013), which was a technical government, Letta I (2013-2014), Renzi (2014-2016), both post-electoral-coalition governments and Gentiloni (2016-2018), which can be seen as a president’s government.

inaugural speeches for the Italian presidency of the Council. Indeed, Conte did not make any direct reference to DI key words, but EU-related issues were highly present in his speech (Appendix 5).

2.3 Parliamentary debates

Next, the analysis focused on parliamentary debates between 2004 and 2019 (only debates in the Italian Chamber of Deputies were analysed). Manual counts of key words in repositories of parliamentary debates were used as data. As before, three sets of key words were used. At the level of DI models, plotting the frequency of key words over time (Figure 4) shows several things. First, DI was not a very salient issue over the entire period, with a total of 121 references and always fewer than 20 references a year. Second, the salience of DI models varied significantly over time with no clear trend. Third, peaks in salience appear to correspond mainly to Treaty changes (2004-2005: Constitution, 2007-2008: Lisbon), the euro crisis, discussion around the European Stability Mechanism (2012) and debates on the future of Europe (2016-2018). Additionally, the figure shows that DI salience was lowest from 2008 until 2011 and then again between 2013 and 2015. The presence of three peaks suggests that discussion of DI and related issues is driven by EU events (e.g. discussion on the Treaties and the euro crisis) and not (only) by domestic politics.

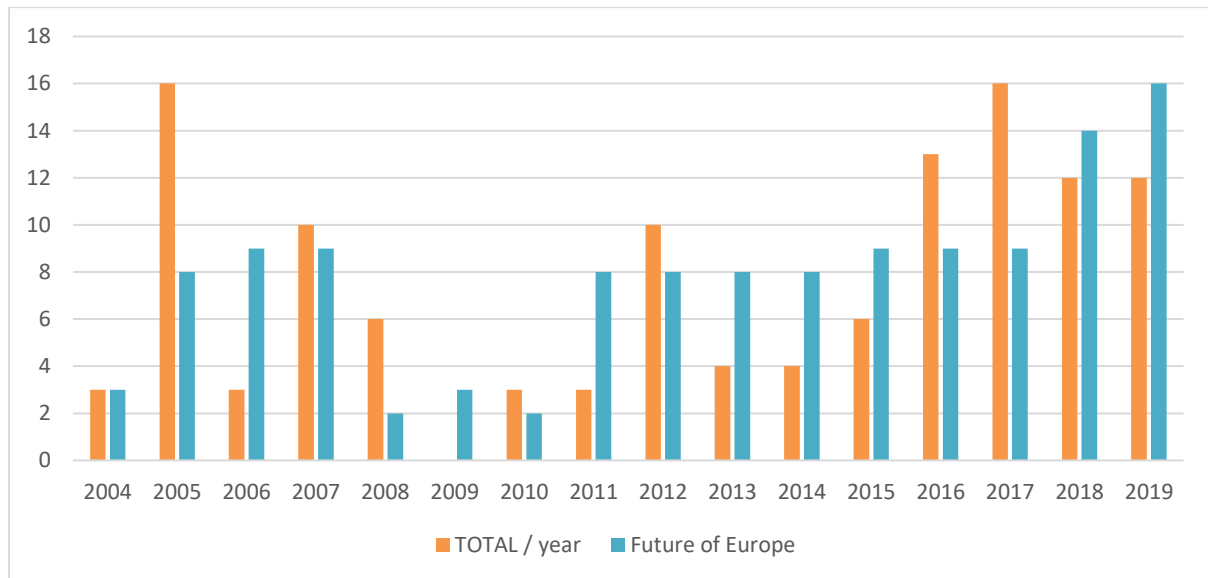
Figure 1 - The salience of conceptual key words (DI models) in parliamentary debates



The next question was whether there was variation in the salience of particular key words and whether particular key words corresponded to particular events/time periods. Breaking down the total of all the key words for DI models in the entire period 2004-2020 (Appendix 6) shows several things. First, some key words were more frequent than others. In particular, ‘core Europe’ accounts for almost 65% of all the references to conceptual key words. Given that Italy is among the founding countries of the EU, it is unsurprising that most of the references related to the concept of ‘core Europe.’ Very often, indeed, Italian legislators urge their colleagues not to forget the central role that Italy should play in the European arena in the light of its historical engagement. The second most used key phrase is ‘two-speed Europe,’ followed by ‘coalition of the willing.’ We can therefore conclude that the majority of references belong to the ‘different end point’ model of DI. Second, the breakdown in two different peak years shows that the distribution of conceptual key words varied significantly across peak years: 50% of the key words in 2017 belong to the ‘different-speed’ model. This model was also highly discussed in 2012 (around 30% of the references), but was less relevant in 2005, when instead ‘coalition of the willing’ was more debated (32% of the references).

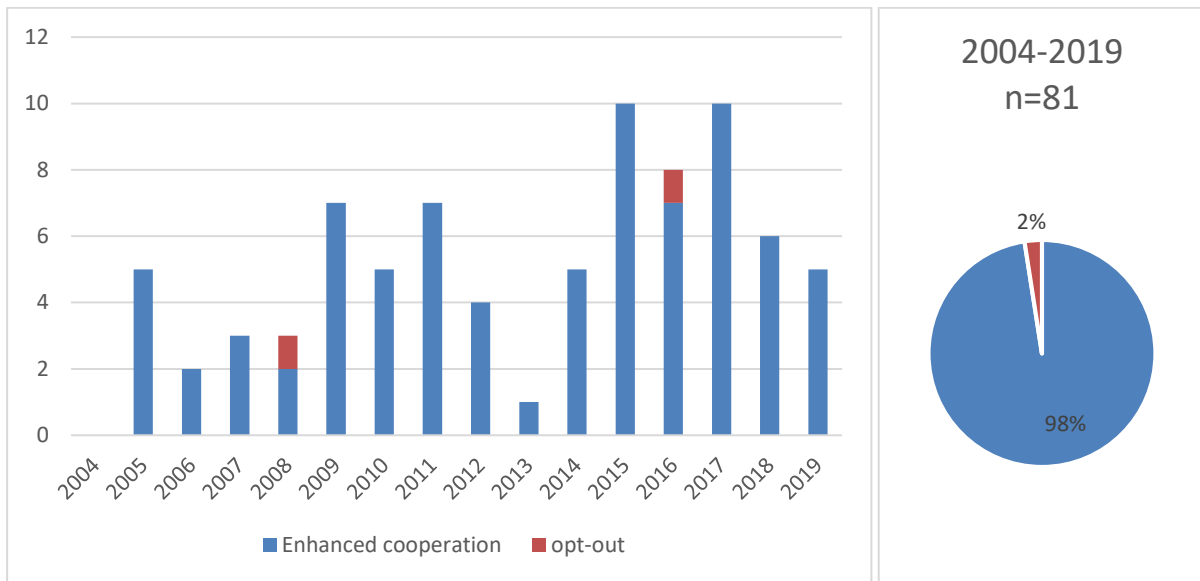
The analysis then compared the frequency of the conceptual DI key words with the key phrase ‘future of Europe’ (Figure 2). There is a correspondence between debates on the future of Europe (FoE) and the saliency of DI. The FoE saliency is particularly noticeable in the 2018 and 2019, probably because of discussion triggered by Brexit and the new set-up of the EU.

Figure 2 - The saliency of conceptual key words in parliamentary debates – relative to the FOE debate



Next, the analysis moved from the level of DI models to the level of specific DI mechanisms, namely ‘enhanced co-operation’ and ‘opt-out.’ Both are internal differentiation mechanisms, but while enhanced co-operation is driven by a preference for more integration, opt-outs are driven by a preference for less integration. The distribution of references to DI mechanisms over time (Figure 3) shows, first, that DI mechanisms were not discussed more intensely than the conceptual key words, with a total of 81 references to DI mechanisms. Additionally, the peak years are somewhat synchronised with those for DI models. This is particularly true of the peak in 2017.

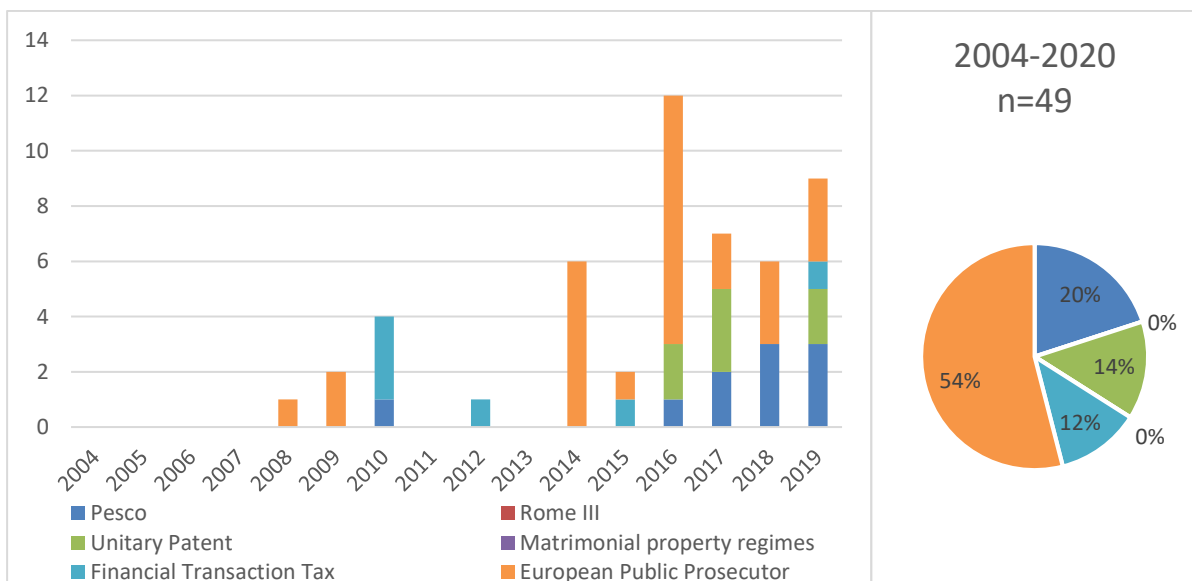
Figure 3 - The salience of DI mechanisms in parliamentary debates



The breakdown by DI mechanisms shows that in the case of Italy almost 100% of the references refer to enhanced co-operation, while there is basically no reference to opt-out mechanisms. This prevalence of references to enhanced co-operation is also confirmed over time, since ‘opt-out’ was only mentioned 3 times in total over the period of time considered.

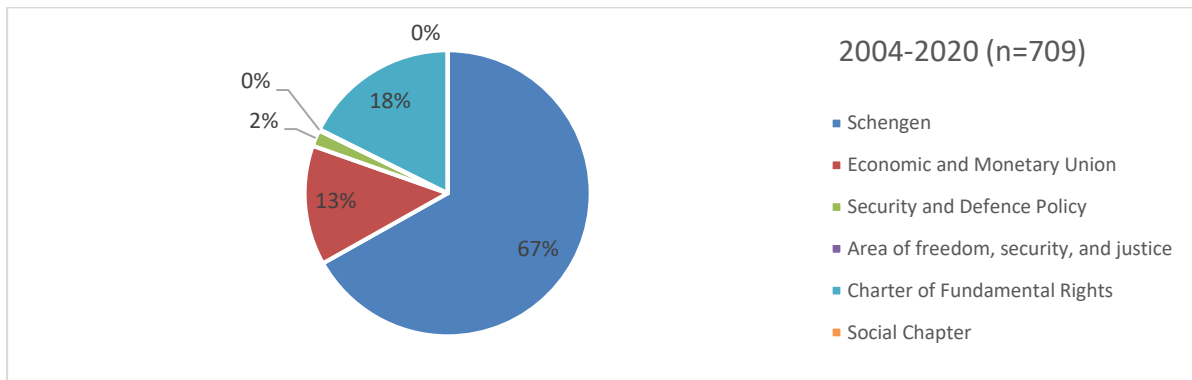
The analysis now moves from the level of DI mechanisms to the level of specific **DI instances**. First, the focus is on enhanced co-operation. For the analysis, enhanced co-operation was broken down into six instances (Figure 4). Pesco is included here, even though it is not formally an instance of enhanced co-operation. A temporal analysis of the aggregated DI instances of enhanced co-operation showed that Italian governments never referred to any of the six instances before 2008 and a peak was reached in 2016 and then again in 2019. The peaks in 2016 and 2019 are mainly due to references to the European Public Prosecutor and Pesco.

Figure 4 - The salience of instances of enhanced co-operation in parliamentary debates



Regarding opt-outs, the analysis focused on those EU policies for which at least one Member State has an opt-out. While the total of 709 references to these policies is relatively high compared to other key words (Figure 5), they indicate the salience of the policy fields themselves rather than the salience of debate on opting out of a particular policy field. The breakdown shows that in Italy (which does not have any opt-out) most of the references were made to Schengen, probably due to the fact that this is also the most generic term with which one can refer to EU agreements on free movement and/or to irregular migration towards the EU.

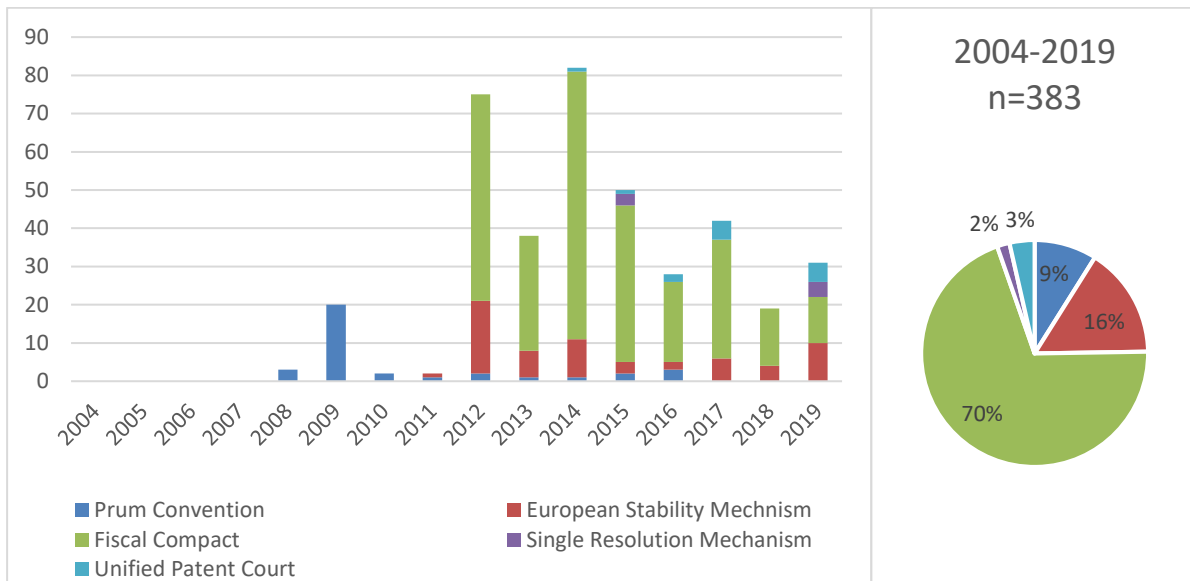
Figure 5 - The salience of opt-out policy fields in parliamentary debates



Finally, the analysis moves from instances of internal DI to instances of external DI, such as inter se agreements and association agreements. First, inter se agreements are international agreements among EU Member States allowing them to circumvent the institutional constraints of the community method. The analysis included five inter se agreements. A temporal analysis (Figure 6) of the aggregated key words showed that they appeared in Italian parliamentary debates mainly from 2012 onwards, the year in which the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union was approved. Overall, the most frequent key phrases were ‘Fiscal Compact’ (70%), ‘European Stability Mechanism’ (16%)² and ‘Single Resolution Mechanism’ (13%), all of which were clearly related to the euro crisis.

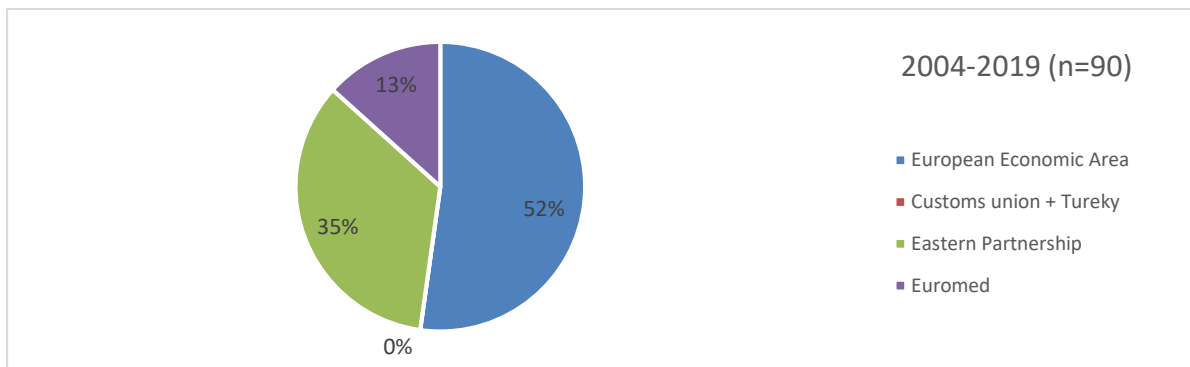
² The Covid crisis has stimulated a heated debate in Italian politics about the opportuneness of accessing the European Stability Mechanism. It is therefore not surprising that in the first six months of 2020 there have already been nine references to it in parliamentary debates.

Figure 6 - The salience of instances of inter se agreements into DI instances 2004-2020 (n=392)



Four instances of external association agreements were included in the analysis. Figure 7 shows that 52% of the key word references refer to the EEA, making it by far the most salient external association agreement. Moreover, dividing the four agreements into two market-centred (EEA and customs union) and two mixed agreements (Eastern Partnership and Euromed), they are equally split. Finally, regional differences in salience emerge: (1) the southern agreements (Euromed and the Turkish customs union) are least salient, (2) the Eastern Partnership is about three times as salient and (3) the EEA agreement is by far the most salient.

Figure 7 - The salience of instances of external association agreements in parliamentary debates



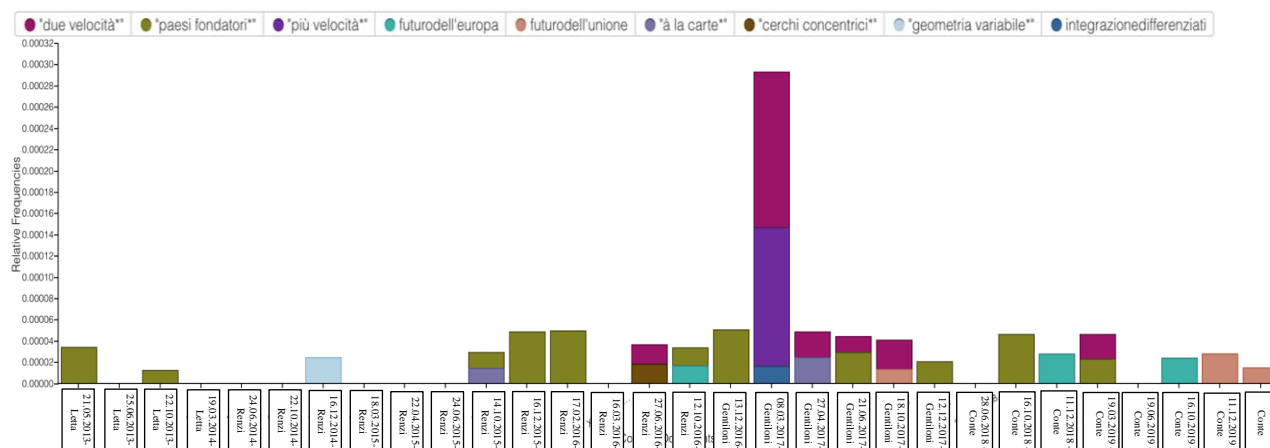
2.4 European Council statements

In a final step, the salience analysis turned to 30 prime minister European Council statements in parliament between 2013 and 2020. In these statements, the prime minister informs the Italian parliament about the position of the Italian Government in view of European Council meetings. Subsequently, members of the parliament can address the prime minister. As such, these statements were used as sources of information on the intersection between domestic and European politics, with prime ministers being most likely to formulate clear positions on EU membership and European integration.

The frequency of council statements has remained stable since 2012 (Appendix 7). Indeed, it was only in December 2012 that the Italian Parliament approved a law (n.234/2012) that obliges the prime minister to formally inform the Parliament about the official position of the Italian government on the agenda of the European Council. The first time that an Italian prime minister gave such a speech was in May 2013. It is for this reason that the analysis of these speeches could not go further back in time. Moreover, Figure 8 tells us that there are two particularly salient topics that denote two different phases: a ‘crisis’ phase from 2013 to 2016 and then a ‘Brexit’ phase from 2016 to 2019. Other salient issues have been ‘defence’ (peak in 2017) and ‘immigration’ (a topic that is constantly debated but that was very prominent in 2015 during the so-called ‘migration crisis’ of Summer 2015). The peak reached by the word *Constitution* (in Italian, *Costituzione*) in December 2014 was most likely due to discussion on the constitutional reform on which the cabinet led by Renzi started to work at the end of 2014. It was for this reason that in the discussion after Matteo Renzi’s statement before the European Council many legislators referred to this reform.

There were few references to conceptual key words, as is shown in Figure 8. Nevertheless, there was a speech in March 2017 in which the expressions ‘two-speed’ and ‘multiple-speed’ Europe were frequently used. Otherwise, as in parliamentary debates, many references were made to ‘core Europe.’

Figure 8 - The salience of conceptual key words in council statements



DI mechanisms and instances, on the contrary, were almost never mentioned in the statements, with the exception of two instances of inter se agreements, i.e. ‘Fiscal Compact’ and ‘European Stability Mechanism.’

3. The governments’ positions on DI

This section presents the positions of various Italian governments regarding DI. It is based on an analysis of parliamentary debates and prime minister speeches. The section is divided into two subsections. The first subsection provides a quantitative overview of the distribution of positive, neutral and negative statements regarding DI models and DI mechanisms. The second section reconstructs different governments’ positions on DI based on a qualitative assessment of selected statements (with bold highlights added by the author of the report).

3.1 Quantitative overview of government positions

Regarding DI models, the analysis of parliamentary debates shows that assessment of the two models is rather **mixed** (Figures 9 and 10). Four observations stand out. First, we can see that the Multi-End

Europe model has a more positive connotation, especially among governing parties. Given that Italy has been involved since the very beginning in the process of European integration, often politicians underline the importance of the Italian role in Europe. It is therefore unsurprising that governing parties favour this DI model. Second, while assessment of this model is positive overall, most of the references were neutral. This is again unsurprising, because references to the fact that Italy is a founding member are usually just emphatic but they do not really reveal a preference for this DI model. Third, the multi-speed model, on the contrary, has a negative reputation, in particular among opposition parties. Indeed, legislators from the opposition often remark that Italy would be excluded from a two-speed Europe and hence they oppose such a potential development. To put it differently, we can say that Italian political parties support the model of core Europe when they make the point that Italy is part of this core, while the same parties are against a multi-speed Europe if they fear that Italy may be left out of the core. Fourth, the aggregate assessment changed over time, indicating that context matters, especially for the multi-speed model. Indeed, it is only after 2017 that parties seem to be particularly critical about the possibility of a European Union that develops at different speeds.

Figure 9 - Position on multi-end Europe (core Europe)

(n = 28)	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Government	2	10	9
Opposition	1	10	4
2008	1	5	1
2012	1	4	0
2017-2020	1	14	14

Figure 10 - Position on multi-speed Europe (two-speed + multi-speed)

(n =39)	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Government	6	2	4
Opposition	16	2	1
2008	1	0	1
2012	0	0	0
2017-2020	20	6	8

Regarding DI mechanisms, only results for enhanced co-operation are shown because opt-out was rarely mentioned in Italian parliamentary debates (Figure 11). We can see that the position of Italian governments has usually been either positive or neutral but never negative. Enhanced co-operation is often seen as a recommendable solution to advance EU integration while at the same time keeping together the different interests of Member States. Enhanced co-operation might also be a way for Italy to stay within the European Union's core. Moreover, this issue became particularly relevant after 2017, especially when the Chamber of Deputies had to discuss Italy's participation in the new Unified Patent Court. The discussion was triggered by the fact that Italian was not recognised by the Court as an official language and therefore Italy initially refused to be part of the agreement.

Figure 11 - Position on enhanced co-operation

(n = 54)	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Government	0	14	20
Opposition	3	6	3
2008	0	2	1
2012	1	3	8
2017-2020	3	17	17

Overall, we can conclude that in Italy, by virtue of its historical involvement in the EU integration process, there is a positive attitude towards a multi-end DI model and an appreciation of tools such as enhanced co-operation. On the contrary, a multi-speed Europe is strongly opposed by Italian politicians, who fear that their country might be among those left behind if such a model of integration is implemented.

3.2 Qualitative assessment of government positions

The qualitative assessment of government positions focuses only on the period 2017-2020, since the results of the quantitative analysis show that the issue analysed only became salient in this more recent phase. This qualitative analysis suggests that positive assessments of both the multi-end Europe DI model and the enhanced co-operation mechanism are related to Italy's central role in the European integration process, which none of the governments wanted to stop but instead enhance (also thanks to tools such as enhanced co-operation). On the contrary, the opposition parties have a very critical view of the alternative DI model (multiple-speed Europe) because they believe that Italy might be excluded by the other founding members and hence its interests might not be well represented and protected.

3.2.1 The governments' positions

The quantitative assessment of parliamentary debates suggested that most of the times that MPs from governing parties refer to the concept of 'core Europe' they do it in a neutral way to underline Italy's historical role in the European integration process and/or to call for a greater influence by the country on EU political decisions. For example, in the inaugural speech of the Italian presidency of the European Council in July 2014, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi underlined Italy's contribution to the European project:

"I would add, and I want to say this with great clarity and conviction: here I represent a **founding country** of the European Union and a country that continues to make an important economic contribution to the European institutions every year. We Italians are among those who give more than they receive and we are happy and proud of it because the greatest value is not economic"³ (Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, European Parliament, 2 July 2014 session).

Similarly, the words of Deputy Francesco Silvestri (Five Star Movement) well summarise the attitude of Italian governments on this subject:

"The Prime Minister should work to make sure that the EU takes Italy's call for modification of the Stability Mechanism into account. We are indeed the second largest manufacturing country in Europe, we are one of the six **founding members**, we are the third largest contributor to the Stability

³ "Aggiungo e lo voglio dire con grande chiarezza e convinzione: qui rappresento un Paese fondatore dell'Unione europea e un Paese che continua ogni anno a dare economicamente un contributo importante alle istituzioni europee. Noi italiani siamo tra quelli che danno più di quanto ricevono e ne siamo felici e ne siamo orgogliosi perché il valore più grande non è quello economico."

Mechanism. Therefore, we should – and we want to – be heard”⁴ (Deputy Francesco Silvestri, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 12 December 2019 session).

Nevertheless, in certain instances governing parties also stress the positive aspect of strengthening co-operation among the founding members of the European project. For example, in 2018, when the MP Andrea Crippa from the League presented his concluding report on Italian participation in the EU, he called for:

“Enhancing the internal cohesion of **EU founding states**, which should aim for the common goal of a flourishing, sustainable, social and stronger Europe”⁵ (Deputy Andrea Crippa, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 10 October 2018 session).

When it comes to the multi-speed DI model, instead, it is seen in a more critical manner not only by opposition parties but also by those which are in government. As already mentioned, MPs express their fear that Italy might be seen as a weak country and as a consequence it might be put in the group of slow-speed countries. On three occasions in 2017 (March, April and October), Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni Silveri compared Europe to a train made of 27 coaches that travels at the speed of the slowest wagon. He criticised this model saying that:

“If a train that has 27 wagons necessarily moves at the **speed** dictated by the slowest of these 27 or the one that wants to go slower, the result is certainly not the best”⁶ (Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni Silveri, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 27 April 2017 session).

Nevertheless, Gentiloni also reassured Italian legislators about the fact that there is no threat of Italy being left behind as the country belongs to ‘core-Europe.’ In his words,

“And, please, let us not live this discussion, as we sometimes do, as if it were a gigantic plot against Italy. It is true that there was a **two-speed Europe** debate twenty years ago, thirty years ago, in which Italy could be considered a country at risk of being part of the B series, rather than the serious A series. We are talking about something completely different: Italy is among the countries promoting this approach. And obviously, particularly in a European Union that will lose the United Kingdom, it will be one of the countries that will be absolutely **key players** in this process. Therefore, let us not look at this as a threat, let us not look at this as a decision to be taken tomorrow, let us look at it as a prospective response to the slowness, the difficulty, the risk of impasse in the European processes that we have”⁷ (Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni Silveri, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 8 March 2017 session).

Not only Italian prime ministers seem to be critical of the multi-speed model. Legislators also mention the fear that Italy might be put in the group of countries proceeding at a lower speed. For instance, Deputy Riccardo Ricciardi (Five Star Movement) expressed very clearly this anxiety when discussing the consequences of the Covid-19 crisis at the European level:

⁴ “Chiediamo che l'Italia sia ascoltata e siamo sicuri del fatto che lei per primo, Presidente, lavori affinché l'Europa possa accogliere le nostre richieste di modifica, come ha sempre fatto: siamo la seconda potenza manifatturiera dell'Europa, siamo uno dei sei Paesi fondatori, siamo il terzo contributore del Meccanismo europeo di stabilità e dobbiamo - e vogliamo - essere ascoltati.”

⁵ “L'obiettivo di rafforzamento della coesione interna dell'Unione perseguito dai Paesi fondatori, anche attraverso l'impegno comune per un'Europa sicura, prospera, sostenibile, sociale e più forte sulla scena internazionale.”

⁶ “Se un convoglio che ha 27 vagoni si muove necessariamente alla velocità dettata dal più lento di questi 27 o da quello che vuole procedere più lentamente, il risultato non è certo dei migliori.”

⁷ “E, per favore, non viviamo questa discussione, come ogni tanto ci capita, come se fosse un gigantesco complotto nei confronti dell'Italia. È vero che c'è stato vent'anni fa, trent'anni fa, un dibattito sull'Europa a due velocità, nel quale l'Italia poteva essere considerata un Paese a rischio di far parte della serie B, piuttosto che della serie A. Stiamo parlando di una cosa completamente diversa: l'Italia è tra i Paesi promotori di questa impostazione. E ovviamente, in modo particolare in un'Unione europea che perderà il Regno Unito, sarà uno dei Paesi assolutamente protagonisti di questo processo. Quindi, non guardiamo a questa cosa come una minaccia, non guardiamo a questa cosa come una decisione da prendere domani, guardiamola come a una risposta di prospettiva alle lentezze, alle difficoltà, al rischio di impasse dei processi europei che abbiamo.”

“Europe cannot afford to move forward **at two different speeds**, because those countries which believe that they could go on now, if they find themselves surrounded by a desert [that is, in trouble], they will immediately be swamped and crushed by other world economic powers. We can only get along together and not separately”⁸ (Deputy Riccardo Ricciardi, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 21 May 2020 session).

However, especially when compared to the more critical views of this DI model among the opposition, we find MPs who positively evaluate a multi-speed integration process if it can allow deeper integration. Two examples are particularly suitable to illustrate this point. The first comes from Deputy Marina Berlinghieri (Democratic Party), who said:

“We must, therefore, continue to acknowledge that what has been done is not enough and that we cannot stand still, especially after Brexit and the populist winds that are blowing ever stronger. We must move forward in a precise direction, which is that of further and more coherent development of the integration process, even at **multiple speeds**, and of strengthening the democratic legitimacy of the European institutions”⁹ (Deputy Marina Berlinghieri, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 8 March 2017 session).

Similarly, in the same session, Deputy Marietta Tidei (Democratic Party) stated that:

“However, a **multi-speed Europe** must aim to strengthen integration: today more than ever there is an urgent need for closer co-operation and variable geometry, to give new impetus to the old continent after Brexit, Trump's anti-European barrages, the risk of populists gaining power in countries like France and Holland”¹⁰ (Deputy Marietta Tidei, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 8 March 2017 session).

However, if there is a topic that Italian governments support with no criticism it is enhanced co-operation. There are no instances of negative views of this DI mechanism among governing parties over time. This tool is seen, at least by governing parties, as the best way to move forward with the EU integration process. This view is well summarised in one of the speeches given by Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni Silveri before the European Council (March 2017):

“If the European Union were to fail, we would miss it very quickly and dramatically. Therefore, in my opinion, we must start from this awareness, but at the same time point out a way forward, a way forward for the next 10 years, a future which in the Rome Declaration should be based, in our opinion, on 3 or 4 fundamental choices: the choice, first and foremost, for a more cohesive Europe in terms of security and defence, capable, therefore, if there are gaps, of filling them. I do not now want to open a debate on the new international political context, but the European Union certainly has every interest in having more cohesive and more integrated security and defence policies on the ground in order to take responsibility and make progress. Paradoxically, where, in 1954, a first attempt at European construction failed with the French ‘no’ to the European Defence Community, today there are the conditions to start again, at least with forms of **reinforced co-operation**, structured between some countries and with decisions that have already been taken”¹¹ (Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni Silveri, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 8 March 2017 session).

⁸ “L'Europa non può permettersi di andare a due velocità, perché anche quei Paesi che pensano di andare avanti, se si ritroveranno con il deserto intorno, saranno immediatamente, anche loro stessi, travolti e stritolati da altre economie mondiali. Nessuno, quindi, si illuda di salvarsi se non ci salveremo tutti insieme.”

⁹ “Dobbiamo, dunque, continuare nella consapevolezza che quanto fatto non è sufficiente e che non si può restare fermi, soprattutto dopo la Brexit e i venti populistici che soffocano sempre più forte. Bisogna andare avanti in una direzione precisa, che è quella dell'ulteriore e più coerente sviluppo del processo di integrazione, anche a più velocità, e del rafforzamento della legittimazione democratica delle istituzioni europee.”

¹⁰ “L'Europa a più velocità deve però puntare a rafforzare l'integrazione: oggi più che mai urgono cooperazioni rafforzate e geometrie variabili, per dare nuovo impulso al vecchio continente dopo Brexit, le bordate anti-europei di Trump, il rischio dei populistici alle porte del Governo in Paesi come Francia e Olanda.”

¹¹ “Se venisse a mancare l'Unione europea, noi ne sentiremmo la mancanza molto rapidamente e drammaticamente. Quindi dobbiamo, a mio avviso, partire da questa consapevolezza, ma al tempo stesso indicare una strada in avanti, una strada di futuro per i prossimi 10 anni, un futuro che nella Dichiarazione di Roma dovrebbe basarsi, a nostro avviso, su 3 o 4 scelte fondamentali: la scelta innanzitutto di un'Europa più coesa sul piano della sicurezza e della difesa, capace quindi,

MPs from governing parties praise the use of enhanced co-operation. In particular, after Brexit this DI mechanism seems to be the only solution to avoid other countries following the example of Great Britain. In the words of Deputy Tea Albini (Democratic Party),

“We need to strengthen the actions to promote a new social pact to protect against exclusion, poverty and disease, including **through enhanced co-operation**”¹² (Deputy Tea Albini, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 19 July 2017 session).

Finally, enhanced co-operation is often mentioned in positive terms in relation to two specific issues: the European Defence Community (as the excerpt by Prime Minister Gentiloni indicates) and the Unified Patent Court. On this latter topic, a passage from a speech by government official Sandro Gozi (Democratic Party) well summarises the benefits of enhanced co-operation on the subject of the European patent:

“There are several issues: the issue of trademarks, the issue of market abuse and the issue of patents. It was a difficult step, a very contrasted step, even within our country, but one that I believe to be strategic, to have led Italy **to join enhanced co-operation on patents** and, therefore, to give us the opportunity to take full advantage of this new legislation, for a country that is at the forefront. In fact, Italy, if I am not mistaken, is the third most patenting country in the European Union today, with the United Kingdom still in”¹³ (Undersecretary for European Affairs Sandro Gozi, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 9 October 2017 session).

3.2.2 The opposition’s position

The Italian opposition does not hold very different views on the multi-end DI model compared to governing parties. Indeed, most of the statements are either neutral or positive. Specifically, according to some opposition parties, Italy should prioritise its relationship with other founding members of the EU in order to strengthen the integration process. This is well explained in the words of Deputy Federico Fornaro (Free and Equal):

“Clearly, we are waiting for the government to pass the budget law and the twelve related decrees, on that we will continue our opposition. But look, the country needs much more, and above all the country, as has been rightly recalled, does not need to create that war against Europe, against the European institutions. We need to resume a terrain of harsh confrontation, but without alliances or thinking, worse, of finding alliances no longer with the **founding countries**, but by going in search of them towards the countries of Visegrád. In doing so we take the country and Italy not only outside Europe but we bring it back to a dangerous terrain for the economy and for Italian citizens, and we burn a part of our future”¹⁴ (Deputy Federico Fornaro, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 11 October 2018 session).

se ci sono vuoti di riempirli. Adesso non voglio aprire una discussione sul nuovo contesto della politica internazionale, ma di certo l'Unione europea ha tutto l'interesse ad avere sul terreno della sicurezza e della difesa politiche più coese e più integrate, per assumersi responsabilità e fare dei passi in avanti. Paradossalmente lì dove, nel 1954, fallì un primo tentativo di costruzione europea con il «no» francese alla Comunità europea di difesa, oggi ci sono le condizioni per ripartire, almeno con forme di cooperazione rafforzata, strutturata tra alcuni Paesi e con decisioni che in parte si sono già prese.”

¹² “Occorre rafforzare le azioni utili a promuovere un nuovo patto sociale per proteggere dall'esclusione, dalla povertà e dalla malattia, anche con forme di cooperazione rafforzata.”

¹³ “Vi è il tema dei marchi, il tema degli abusi di mercato e il tema dei brevetti. È stato un passo difficile, contrastato, molto contrastato, anche all'interno del nostro Paese, ma che io ritengo strategico, quello di avere portato l'Italia ad aderire alla cooperazione rafforzata in materia di brevetti e, quindi, a darci la possibilità di sfruttare pienamente questa nuova normativa, per un Paese che è all'avanguardia. Infatti, l'Italia, se non vado errato, è il terzo Paese che brevetta di più nell'Unione europea di oggi, con ancora il Regno Unito dentro.”

¹⁴ “Ovviamente aspettiamo il Governo alla prova della legge di bilancio e dei dodici decreti collegati, su quello continueremo a fare la nostra opposizione; ma guardate, il Paese ha bisogno di ben altro, e soprattutto il Paese, giustamente è stato ricordato, non ha bisogno di creare quella guerra nei confronti dell'Europa, nei confronti delle istituzioni europee. Occorre riprendere un terreno di confronto aspro, ma senza alleanze o pensando, peggio, di trovare le alleanze non più con i Paesi fondatori, ma andandole a cercare verso i Paesi di Visegrád: così facendo si porta il Paese e l'Italia non solo fuori

However, the opposition is definitely more critical than the government of the multi-speed DI model. As indicated in the quantitative analysis, the opposition never speaks with neutral or positive tones of a multi-speed Europe. On the contrary, an integration process at more than one speed is seen as an outrage considering Italy's historical role within the European arena and/or as a way of leaving Italy behind. For instance, Deputy Andrea Orsini (Forza Italia) explains this fear in the following passage:

“We need a solid and coherent vision, which is precisely what this majority lacks. Hence the absolute weakness, the isolation, the irrelevance to which Italy has returned. Hence the restart of **two-speed Europe**, in which Italy is obviously excluded from the fastest part”¹⁵ (Deputy Andrea Orsini, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 20 March 2019 session).

The radical right opposition also underlines the risk of Italy being put among the countries moving at a slower speed. This fear is expressed well in this passage by Deputy Delmastro Delle Vedove (Brothers of Italy):

“Since you became Prime Minister, another treaty has been drafted, which is always called Aachen, but it is not that heroic treaty of Aachen that you will have studied in classical high school like me. It is that treaty with which France and Germany, the champions of Europeanism to which you send messages because they are your political godparents, have created a free economic zone, denying the concept of a common market, creating a common market for the rest of Europe and a market at a **different speed** for France and Germany. Have you dared to say anything against the fact that Italy must not stay out of Europe's A-list club because we are among the **founders** of this blessed Europe?”¹⁶ (Deputy Andrea Delmastro Delle Vedove, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 16 October 2019 session).

Moreover, the multi-speed model is often presented with anti-German rhetoric. In more detail, some opposition deputies believe that the multi-speed model is promoted by Germany but it is not suited to Italian interests. This point clearly emerges in a statement by Deputy Giulio Marcon (Left, Ecology and Freedom):

“Allow me to refer to the meeting in Versailles last Monday,¹⁷ but also to the assessments that you made here on a subject, that of a **two-speed Europe**, on which we have heard different opinions on several occasions in recent days. This is a prospect that we want to reject. **The two-speed Europe** already exists: it is the Europe of Merkel and its allies and then there is the Europe of Tsipras and those who suffer from Merkel's policies. There is the Europe of those who impose austerity and there is the Europe of those who must suffer from austerity. There is the Europe of financial markets, of neoliberal policies, of the devaluation of work and there is the Europe of ever-increasing poverty, of a lack of employment and increasingly residual welfare. Monetary union does not work and like this it cannot work. There is no growth, there is no work, precisely because the construction of Europe in recent years has maintained and exacerbated the regional, social and economic imbalances

dall'Europa, ma lo si riporta su un terreno pericoloso per l'economia e per i cittadini italiani, e si brucia una parte del nostro futuro.”

¹⁵ “Occorre una visione solida e coerente proprio quella che manca a questa maggioranza. Da qui l'assoluta debolezza, l'isolamento, l'irrelevanza in cui l'Italia è tornata. Da qui la ripartenza dell'Europa a due velocità, nella quale ovviamente l'Italia è esclusa dalla parte più veloce.”

¹⁶ “Da quando è diventato Presidente del Consiglio hanno fatto un altro trattato, che si chiama sempre di Aquisgrana, ma non è quell'eroico trattato di Aquisgrana che lei avrà studiato al liceo classico come me. È quel trattato con il quale Francia e Germania, i campioni dell'europeismo a cui lei manda messaggi perché sono i suoi padrini politici, hanno creato una zona economica franca, negando per antonomasia il concetto di mercato comune, creando un mercato comune per tutto il resto d'Europa e un mercato a un'altra velocità per Francia e Germania. Ha osato balbettare qualcosa per dire che l'Italia non sta fuori dal club di serie A dell'Europa perché siamo fra i fondatori di questa benedetta Europa?”

¹⁷ Mr Marcon was referring to a meeting between Italy, France, Germany and Spain in Versailles that took place on 6 March 2017. For more details of the meeting see: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/future-eu/news/versailles-a-summit-to-restore-faith-in-europe/>

between **two Europes**, that of the those who are safe and that of those who remain hidden”¹⁸ (Deputy Giulio Marcon, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 8 March 2017 session).

This negative assessment of a German multi-speed Europe is also shared on the right of the political spectrum. In the same parliamentary session, Deputy Ignazio La Russa (Brothers of Italy) tells the following:

“Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, there is no need, as the 5 Star Movement did, to remember the Bolkestein, Dublin, the Moroccan oranges, the fiscal compact, the various European laws or even the measures of the things we have to eat or the things we can buy. We do not need all this to criticise this Europe; we need only remember that now, when the damage has already largely happened, the only possible, and not even feasible, option is that of a **multi-speed Europe**, that is, a Europe that ends up emphasising even more the power of Germany and then the difficulties of others, which can perhaps be remedied by increasing VAT or actually increasing taxation”¹⁹ (Deputy Ignazio La Russa, Italian Chamber of Deputies, 8 March 2017 session).

Finally, regarding DI mechanisms, the opposition does not talk very frequently about them and without a clear direction. Therefore no examples of statements are shown.

To summarise, the qualitative analysis of government speeches and parliamentary debates has revealed the following: the preferred DI model for Italian parties is multi-end Europe, while both government and opposition are suspicious of a Union that develops at different speeds. In fact, Italian parties fear that Italy, despite its historical role and involvement in the European project, might not meet the standards required to still be part of core Europe. In other words, there is a shared dread that Italy might be left behind by the other founding Member States and might as a consequence lose its relevance in the European arena. Moreover, the opposition often underlines how a multi-speed Europe might best serve German interests but not Italian ones. It is probably for this reason that Italy is also a supporter of tools such as enhanced co-operation, which is seen as the best solution to move the integration process forward while allowing Italy to still be among the core group of Member States.

The qualitative text analysis of the documents collected has only focused on the two DI models and on DI mechanisms. However, an assessment of government positions on DI instances has also been carried out. The results of this additional analysis can be seen in Figure 12. It is important to underline that regarding opt-out instances, there has never really been discussion in Italy about not subscribing to or unsubscribing from any of the agreements. In most cases, indeed, Italy’s participation in these agreements occurred early on in the 1990s/early 2000s (that is, in a period not considered in this analysis). Therefore, the quotations selected mostly reflect how Italian parties are usually firmly convinced of the suitability of these agreements for Italy’s interests and those of other countries.

¹⁸ “Mi consenta di far riferimento alla riunione di Versailles di lunedì scorso, ma anche delle valutazioni che lei ha fatto in questa sede e questo a proposito di un tema, quello dell’Europa a due velocità, sul quale più volte in questi giorni abbiamo sentito opinioni anche diverse. È una prospettiva che noi vogliamo rigettare. L’Europa a due velocità già esiste: è l’Europa della Merkel e dei suoi alleati e poi c’è l’Europa di Tsipras e di chi soffre le politiche della Merkel; c’è l’Europa di chi impone l’austerità e c’è l’Europa di chi l’austerità la deve subire; c’è l’Europa dei mercati finanziari, delle politiche neoliberiste, della svalutazione del lavoro e c’è l’Europa della povertà sempre più estesa, della mancanza di occupazione e di un welfare sempre più residuale. L’unione monetaria non sta funzionando e così non può funzionare. La crescita non c’è, il lavoro manca, proprio anche perché la costruzione europea di questi anni ha mantenuto e acuito gli squilibri regionali, sociali ed economici tra due Europe, quella dei salvati e quella dei sommersi.”

¹⁹ “Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, non c’è bisogno, come ha fatto il Movimento 5 Stelle, di ricordare la «Bolkestein», Dublino, le arance del Marocco, il Fiscal compact, le varie leggi europee e addirittura le misure delle cose che dobbiamo mangiare o delle cose che possiamo comprare. Non c’è bisogno di tutto ciò per criticare questa Europa; basterebbe ricordare che adesso, quando il danno è già largamente avvenuto, l’unica opzione possibile, e neanche realizzabile, è quella di un’Europa a più velocità, cioè un’Europa che finisca ancora di più a sottolineare la potenza della Germania e poi le difficoltà degli altri, a cui magari porre rimedio aumentando l’IVA o aumentando di fatto la tassazione.”

Figure 12 - Position on DI instances (differentiated policies)

DI mechanism	DI instance	Participation	Examples – government position
Enhanced co-operation	Rome III	N/A	Never mentioned in parliamentary debates
	Unitary Patent	YES (Treaty ratified only in 2015 in protest against the Commission's decision to exclude Italian from the languages used to register patents)	<p>An example of a critical position regarding the Unitary Patent: “Mr Letta, we ask you and your Government to consider very carefully the issue of the single European patent and how to adhere to it. It could be a flywheel for us or an additional weapon of improper competition in the hands of German industry. Spreading the patent culture in our country is a categorical imperative both in the private and public sectors as well as in universities, where patent offices should be promoted. This does not mean, however, uncritically adhering to a patent which, both in terms of registration and judicial protection, seems to unduly favour companies in English, French and German-speaking countries”²⁰ (Deputy Adriana Galgano, Civic Choice, 22.10.2013).</p> <p>The government's position in favour: “Italian adhesion to the unitary patent package is certainly one of the government's priorities, and the Ministry of Economic Development, also in coordination with the Department of European policies, is evaluating precisely the economic aspects of Italy's adhesion, taking into account, on the one hand, the different interests of the private stakeholders involved and, on the other hand, the lack of definition to date, at the European level, of the economic and financial elements related to the new patent title and the unified patent court, the so-called UPT”²¹ (Federica Guidi, Minister for Economic Development, 18.02.2015).</p>

²⁰ “Presidente Letta, le chiediamo che lei e il Governo consideriate con molta attenzione la questione del brevetto unico europeo e come aderirvi. Potrebbe esser un volano per noi oppure un'ulteriore arma di concorrenza impropria in mano all'industria tedesca. Diffondere la cultura del brevetto nel nostro Paese è un imperativo categorico sia nel privato che nel pubblico come nelle università, dove è da favorire la diffusione degli uffici brevetti. Ciò non significa, tuttavia, aderire acriticamente a un brevetto che, sia per le modalità di registrazione sia per la tutela giurisdizionale, sembra favorire indebitamente le imprese dei Paesi di lingua inglese, francese e tedesca.”

²¹ “L'adesione italiana al pacchetto del brevetto unitario è sicuramente una delle priorità del Governo, e il Ministero dello sviluppo economico, in coordinamento anche con il Dipartimento delle politiche europee, sta valutando proprio gli aspetti economici dell'adesione dell'Italia, tenuto conto, da un lato, dei diversi interessi degli stakeholder privati coinvolti e, dall'altro, della mancata definizione ad oggi, a livello europeo, degli elementi di carattere economico e finanziario relativi al nuovo titolo brevettale e al tribunale unificato dei brevetti, il cosiddetto TUV.”

	Matrimonial Property Regimes	N/A	Never mentioned in parliamentary debates.
	Financial Transaction Tax	YES	<p>“An interesting proposal has emerged in the course of the ongoing discussion among governments on these issues. We are all paying the cost of the crisis and the financial laws that are being made in different European countries are now distributing sacrifices. Only one category seems to be exempt from these sacrifices, and those are the speculators who with their behaviour have caused the crisis or at least have profited from it and increased its effects. A very modest tax on banking transactions would hardly be perceived by normal customers, but it would powerfully curb the speculation that has to operate with huge amounts of borrowed capital on very small amounts of own capital. It would also generate a considerable amount of resources”²² (Deputy Rocco Buttiglione, Union of the Center, 26.07.2010).</p> <p>"Discussion continues among a group of 11 Member States, including Italy, on the proposal for a European financial transaction tax under enhanced co-operation, which is still open and under discussion. I shall conclude by mentioning that any resources that could be obtained from this resource would possibly go to finance the European budget or to other destinations”²³ (Pier Carlo Padoan, Minister for Economics, 29.07.2015).</p>
	European Public Prosecutor	YES	<p>“There is a growing international profile of civil litigation, which is increasingly trying to escape the network of public state jurisdiction, and cross-border crime is growing in areas such as terrorism, drug and arms trafficking, trafficking in human beings, migrant smuggling, cyber crime and counterfeiting. The response to these phenomena can no longer be purely national, which is why we have strongly supported, in recent months, the project to establish the European Public Prosecutor's Office, with a high level of independence and which could also have competence in the areas of terrorism and organised crime in the future”²⁴ (Andrea Orlando, Minister of Justice, 18.01.2017).</p>

²² “Nel corso della discussione in corso fra i governi su questi temi è affiorata una proposta interessante. Tutti stiamo pagando il costo della crisi e le leggi finanziarie che si fanno nei diversi paesi europei oggi distribuiscono sacrifici. Una categoria soltanto sembra esente dai sacrifici e questi sono gli speculatori che con i loro comportamenti hanno provocato la crisi o almeno ne hanno profitato e ne hanno ampliato gli effetti. Una tassa di modestissimo importo sulle transazioni bancarie non verrebbe praticamente percepita dalla clientela normale ma frenerebbe potentemente la speculazione che deve operare con enormi capitali presi a prestito a fronte di capitali propri molto ridotti. Essa inoltre genererebbe una quantità considerevole di risorse.”

²³ “continua la discussione all'interno di un gruppo di 11 Paesi membri, tra cui l'Italia, sulla proposta di un'introduzione d'imposta europea sulle transazioni finanziarie nell'ambito della cooperazione rafforzata, che è ancora aperta e in discussione. Concludo accennando al fatto che le risorse eventualmente ottenibili da questa risorsa andrebbero possibilmente a finanziare il bilancio europeo oppure ad altre destinazioni.”

²⁴ “Crescono, infatti, i profili internazionali del contenzioso civile che sempre più cerca di sottrarsi alle maglie della giurisdizione pubblico statale, cresce la criminalità transfrontaliera in ambiti quali il terrorismo, il traffico di stupefacenti e di armi, la tratta di esseri umani, il traffico di migranti, la criminalità informatica, la contraffazione. La risposta a questi fenomeni

	Pesco	YES	“The long-awaited European defence policy finally sees a possibility of concrete implementation thanks to the recent activation of permanent structured co-operation, PESCO, an important and unprecedented success within the EU, the objective of which is precisely the development and deployment of operational capabilities at the EU level, a capability that Italy is contributing to developing as a protagonist with many projects already in progress” ²⁵ (Angelo Tofalo, Defense Deputy Minister, 13.07.2018).
Opt-out	Schengen	FULL	“The Hague Programme has achieved a number of results, some of them very important, such as the abolition of internal border controls within the Schengen area, which currently allows more than 400 million citizens to travel freely within the EU, and the adoption of a series of legislative acts against racism and xenophobia and for the protection of personal data in the framework of police and judicial co-operation on criminal matters” ²⁶ (Deputy Isidoro Gottardo, 28.07.2009).
	Economic and Monetary Union	FULL	“We will fight for real progress in implementing the road map towards a genuine Economic and Monetary Union. We will call for progress and a definite timetable for the completion of the banking union, including the protection of savers and a single bank resolution mechanism. Unity, therefore, in the fields of money, financial structures and economic policies for work and development. All this, however, is not enough, or at least not enough if it is not within the framework of the great and historic objective of greater political integration and true democratic legitimacy” ²⁷ (Prime Minister Enrico Letta, 21.05.2013).
	Security and Defence Policy	FULL	“The Treaty, of which we are about to ratify the text, is not a secondary, indeed I would say it is a central, stage in the commitment that our country is making to contribute to the definition of the concept of European security and defence identity. In fact, our objective, also in the light of more general developments in international politics and relations in the global world, is to strengthen the European Security and Defence Policy, which represents one of the components (not exclusively, not the only component), but one of the most significant

non può più essere soltanto nazionale; per questo abbiamo sostenuto con forza, nei mesi scorsi, il progetto di istituzione della Procura europea, con un alto livello di indipendenza che potesse avere in prospettiva competenza anche in materia di terrorismo e criminalità organizzata.”

²⁵ *“La tanto agognata difesa europea vede finalmente una possibilità di concreta realizzazione grazie alla recente attivazione della cooperazione strutturata permanente, la PESCO, un successo importante e senza precedenti in ambito UE, il cui obiettivo è proprio lo sviluppo e l'impiego di capacità operative a livello comunitario, capacità che peraltro l'Italia sta contribuendo da protagonista a sviluppare con molteplici progetti già in itinere.”*

²⁶ *“Con il Programmema dell'Aia è stato possibile ottenere diversi risultati, alcuni assai importanti come la soppressione dei controlli alle frontiere interne allo spazio Schengen che consente attualmente a oltre 400 milioni di cittadini di viaggiare liberamente nel territorio UE, ovvero l'adozione di una serie di atti legislativi contro il razzismo e la xenofobia e per la protezione dei dati personali nel quadro della cooperazione di polizia e giudiziaria in materia penale.”*

²⁷ *“Ci batteremo perché siano fatti progressi reali nell'attuazione della road map verso un'autentica Unione economica e monetaria. Chiederemo progressi e tempi certi per il completamento dell'unione bancaria, che comprenda anche la tutela dei risparmiatori e un meccanismo unico di risoluzione delle crisi bancarie. Unità, quindi, nel campo della moneta, delle strutture finanziarie, delle politiche economiche volte al lavoro e allo sviluppo. Tutto questo, però, non basta, o quanto meno non basta se non inquadrato nella cornice del grande e storico obiettivo di una maggiore integrazione politica e di una vera legittimazione democratica.”*

			components of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, that is, the second pillar on which the regulatory system of the European Union is based” (Deputy Paolo Corsini, Democratic Party, 14.09.2010).
	Area of Freedom, Security, and Justice	N/A	The Area of Freedom, Security and Justice was mentioned just once in the period considered in the analysis. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the Italian governments’ position on the subject.
	Charter of Fundamental Rights	N/A	The Charter has been mentioned, but the parliament has never discussed opting out from it.
	Social Chapter	N/A	Never mentioned in parliamentary debates.
Inter se agreements	Prüm Convention	YES	“In proposing accession to the Prüm Convention, the Italian government is also responding to the specific invitation it has received from the parliament itself. Moreover, Europe is pushing for closer coordination in the fight against organised crime through an ever-increasing exchange of information between Member States. The Prüm Convention is a particularly advanced instrument and that is why we hope that the parliament and the government will move together on these bases, starting with approval of the text of the law under examination to enable Italy to respond adequately, together with the other European partners, to the growing transnational challenges of terrorism, organised crime and illegal immigration” ²⁸ (Stefania Craxi, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, 04.05.2009).
	European Stability Mechanism	YES	“It is important, once this path has come to the European Council, that, on the one hand, we are going, as we are, to monitor and enhance the Council's outcome in the more technical fora, which will certainly be very demanding, starting with the euro group on Monday and, on the other hand, as far as parliament is concerned, that the parliament, I would say with a clear mind about possible unforeseen difficulties in the overall European framework, proceeds quickly to ratify the fiscal compact and the Treaty establishing the European Stability Mechanism, allowing the approval process to be completed by the end of the month” ²⁹ (Prime Minister Mario Monti, 05.07.2012).

²⁸ “Nel proporre l’adesione alla Convenzione di Prüm il Governo italiano risponde anche allo specifico invito che gli è stato rivolto dal Parlamento. Inoltre, l’Europa spinge nella direzione di un rafforzato coordinamento nella lotta al crimine organizzato tramite un sempre più approfondito scambio di informazioni tra gli Stati membri. Una prospettiva di cui la Convenzione di Prüm rappresenta uno strumento particolarmente avanzato ed è per questo che auspichiamo che Parlamento e Governo si muovano insieme su queste basi, a cominciare dall’approvazione del testo di legge in esame per consentire all’Italia di rispondere adeguatamente, insieme agli altri partner europei, alle crescenti sfide transnazionali del terrorismo, della criminalità organizzata e dell’immigrazione illegale”.

²⁹ “È importante, chiuso questo percorso che è giunto al Consiglio europeo, che, da un lato, noi ci accingiamo, come stiamo facendo, a sorvegliare e a valorizzare il risultato del Consiglio nelle sedi più tecniche, che sicuramente saranno molto impegnative, a partire dall’Eurogruppo di lunedì e, d’altro lato, per quanto riguarda il Parlamento, che il Parlamento, direi con la

	Fiscal Compact	YES	“The reasons why we believe the Fiscal Compact Treaty is important and why it is almost even more important to have it behind us rather than in front of us. So I am looking forward to concluding the negotiations on this treaty on 30 th January, because it is important to have budgetary discipline, to confirm budgetary discipline, to strengthen the credibility of the instruments for applying budgetary discipline, but Europe is not just budgetary discipline. So it is very important that we go further without forgetting the aspect of discipline, but that we invest more constructive political energy in growth, a growth that only those nostalgic for policies that have rarely been successful can think of as resulting from a broad widening of demand through public deficits. This is not the orientation of today's economies, nor do I believe is it the orientation of economic thinking in Italy” ³⁰ (Prime Minister Mario Monti, 12.01.2012).
	Unified Patent Court	YES	“As rapporteur, I have studied this measure in depth, which in my opinion represents an opportunity for the Italian business system, especially for innovative companies, to have a single system for jurisdiction over patents and their exploitation” ³¹ (Deputy Maria Chiara Carrozza, deputy responsible for the law, 14.09.2016).
	Single Resolution Mechanism	YES	“We will fight for real progress in implementing the road map towards a genuine Economic and Monetary Union. We will call for progress and a definite timetable for the completion of the banking union, including the protection of savers and a single bank resolution mechanism” ³² (Prime Minister Enrico Letta, 21.05.2013).

mente sgombra da possibili impreviste difficoltà del quadro complessivo europeo, proceda rapidamente alla ratifica del fiscal compact e del trattato istitutivo del Meccanismo europeo di stabilità, consentendo di concludere l'iter di approvazione entro la fine del mese.”

³⁰ *“Le ragioni per le quali noi riteniamo che il trattato sul fiscal compact sia importante e sia quasi ancora più importante averlo alle spalle anziché di fronte. Quindi io non vedo l'ora che il 30 gennaio si possa chiudere la trattativa su questo trattato, perché è importante la disciplina di bilancio, la conferma della disciplina di bilancio, rafforzare la credibilità degli strumenti per l'applicazione della disciplina di bilancio, ma l'Europa non è solo disciplina di bilancio. Quindi è molto importante che si passi oltre senza dimenticare l'aspetto della disciplina, ma si investa più energia politica costruttiva sul versante della crescita, una crescita che solo nostalgici di politiche che hanno avuto raramente successo possono pensare derivi da un allargamento ampio della domanda attraverso i disavanzi pubblici. Non è questo l'orientamento delle economie di oggi, né credo del pensiero economico in Italia.”*

³¹ *Come relatrice ho studiato approfonditamente questo provvedimento, che rappresenta a mio avviso un'opportunità per il sistema imprenditoriale italiano – soprattutto per le imprese innovative – di avere un sistema unico per la giurisdizione in materia di brevetti e della loro valorizzazione.*

³² *“Ci batteremo perché siano fatti progressi reali nell'attuazione della road map verso un'autentica Unione economica e monetaria. Chiederemo progressi e tempi certi per il completamento dell'unione bancaria, che comprenda anche la tutela dei risparmiatori e un meccanismo unico di risoluzione delle crisi bancarie.”*

External agreements	EEA	YES	“Romania and Bulgaria have been part of Europe since 2007 and it is therefore essential that they also become an integral part of the European Economic Area, since only with full participation in all Community trademark policies and co-operation can there be a real Europeanisation of the new member countries. Still, an unpleasant sensation remains – and this we must tell ourselves out loud – of a two-speed Europe in which some states register closer forms of co-operation than others, of a sort of failure of that dream of a federation of European states that one of the founders of the European Union, the Italian Altiero Spinelli himself, hoped for from the beginning” ³³ (Augusto Di Stanislao, Italy of Values, 18.01.2010).
	Customs Union	N/A	Not mentioned in parliamentary debates
	Eastern partnership	YES	“It is necessary for our country, without prejudice to its convinced support for the development of the Eastern Partnership, to maintain this line, working with the relevant European institutions to relaunch the Union for the Mediterranean project and to ensure adequate financial resources for this purpose.” ³⁴ (Deputy Isidoro Gottardo, People of Freedom, 20.04.2009).
	Euromed	YES	“We must help them [migrants] and we must help them by resuming the Mediterranean Partnership project, the famous Barcelona Process, creating the conditions for economic development in their countries” ³⁵ (Deputy Rocco Buttiglione, 10.09.2015).

³³ “La Romania e la Bulgaria fanno parte dell'Europa fin dal 2007 ed è quindi fondamentale che le stesse diventino parte integrante anche dello Spazio economico europeo, poiché solo con una completa partecipazione a tutte le politiche e le cooperazioni di marchio comunitario si può avere una reale europeizzazione dei Paesi nuovi membri, anche se rimane la spiacevole sensazione - e questo dobbiamo dircelo a voce alta - di una Europa a due velocità in cui alcuni Stati registrano forme di cooperazione più strette di altri, di una sorta di fallimento di quel sogno di federazione degli Stati europei che uno dei fondatori dell'Unione europea, proprio l'italiano Altiero Spinelli, auspicò sin dall'inizio.”

³⁴ “È necessario che il nostro Paese, fermo restando il suo convinto sostegno allo sviluppo del Partenariato orientale, mantenga questa linea, collaborando con le istituzioni europee competenti per rilanciare il progetto dell'Unione per il Mediterraneo e garantendo adeguate risorse finanziarie a tal fine”.

³⁵ “Dobbiamo aiutarli e dobbiamo aiutarli riprendendo il progetto del Partenariato Mediterraneo, il famoso Processo di Barcellona, creando le condizioni per lo sviluppo economico dei loro Paesi”.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Overview of the documents analysed

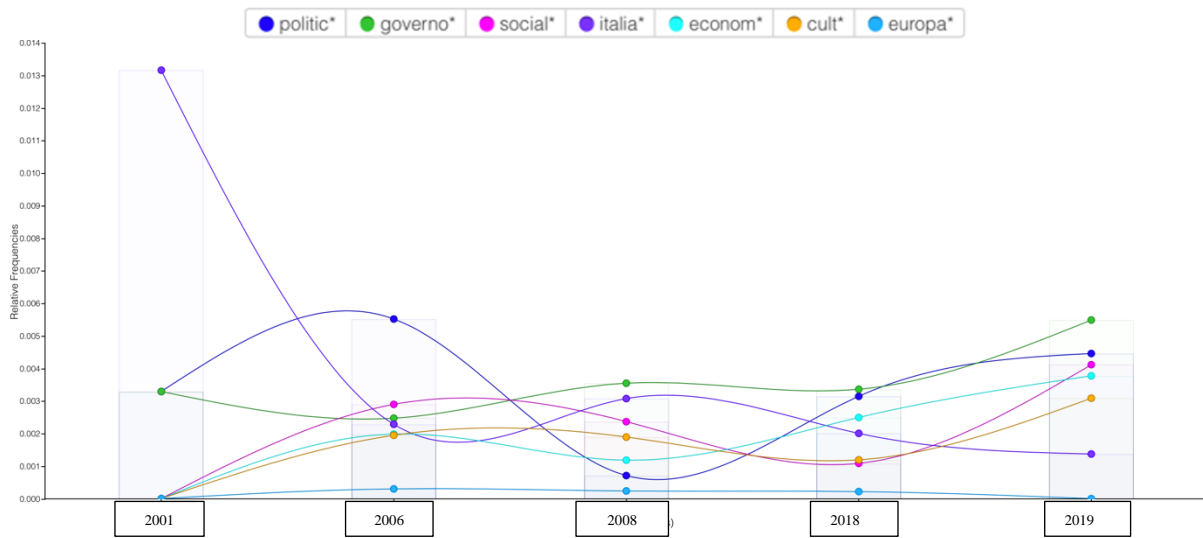
	Category of document	Time period	Details
1	Government programmes	2001-2020	2001, 2006, 2008, 2018, 2019 – The following cabinets did not have a programme: 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2016
2	First speeches and parliamentary debate	2001-2020	The first speech after the election by each PM in parliament and the subsequent debates. Years covered: 2001, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2019.
3	European Council presidency speeches and parliamentary debate in the European Parliament	2003-2020	02.07.2003: Silvio Berlusconi 02.07.2014: Matteo Renzi
4	Future of Europe speech and parliamentary debate in the European Parliament	2017-2020	PM speech in the European Parliament on the Future of Europe on 12 February 2019
5	Prime minister European Council Statements	2013-2020	All pre-Council statements by the PM in the Italian Parliament from 2013 to 2020
6	Parliamentary debates	2008 2012 2017-2020	Documents with one of the following key words: two-speed/multi-speed Europe, core Europe, enhanced co-operation

Appendix 2 Translations of the key words utilised

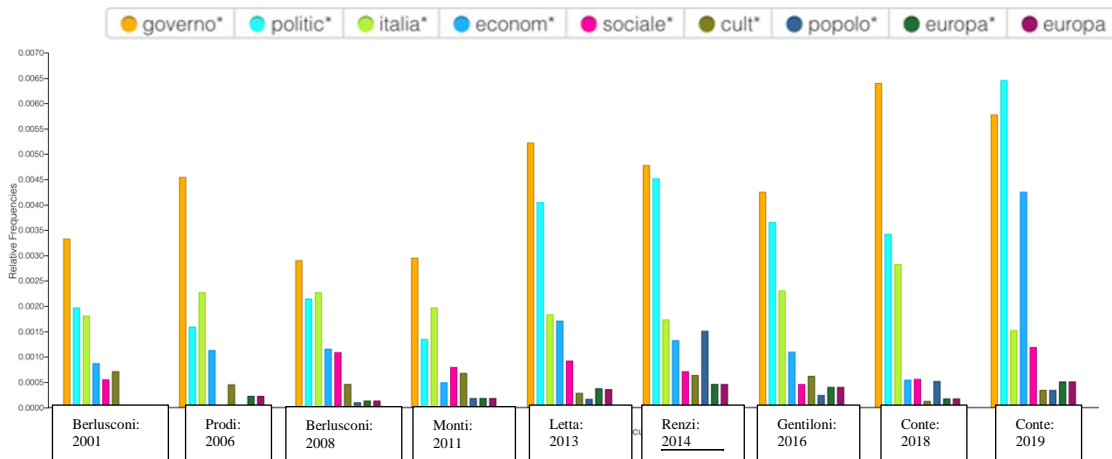
Key word	Italian Translation	Notes
Differentiated integration	Integrazione differenziata	
Future of Europe	Futuro dell'Europa/Futuro dell'Unione	
DI Models: Different Speed		
Coalition of the willing	Coalizione dei volenterosi	
Two-speed Europe	Europa a due velocità	
Multi-speed Europe	Europa a più velocità	
DI Models: Different Endpoints		
Variable geometry	Geometria variabile	
Core Europe	Paesi fondatori	There is no direct translation of 'core Europe' in Italian. Therefore, I opted for 'founding countries' as the best equivalent
Two-tier Europe	Europa a due velocità	There is no direct translation of 'two-tier' but in the Italian context two-speed Europe seems to be the equivalent
Concentric circles à la carte	Cerchi concentrici à la carte	
DI Mechanisms		
Enhanced co-operation	Cooperazione rafforzata	
opt-out	opt-out	Does not have an established translation in Italian

DI Instances – Enhanced co-operation		
Pesco	PESCO/Cooperazione strutturata permanente	
Rome III	Regolamento di Roma III	Other translations used: Patto dell'Unione Europea sul divorzio/Legge europea sul divorzio
Unitary patent	Brevetto Unitario (Europeo)	
Matrimonial property regimes	Regimi patrimoniali delle coppie internazionali	
Financial Transaction Tax	Imposta sulle transazioni finanziarie	Also the English version was searched for
European Public Prosecutor	Procura Europea	
DI Instances – Opt-out		
Schengen	Schengen	
Economic and Monetary Union	Unione economica e monetaria	
Security and Defence Policy	Politica di sicurezza e di difesa comune/ Politica estera e di sicurezza comune	Also used with reference to the national context
Area of Freedom, Security and Justice	Spazio di libertà, sicurezza e giustizia	
Charter of Fundamental Rights	Carta dei diritti fondamentali (dell'Unione Europea)	Also called 'Carta di Nizza'
Social Charter	Carta sociale europea	
DI instances – inter se agreements		
Prüm Convention	Trattato di Prüm	
European Stability Mechanism	Meccanismo Europeo di Stabilità (MES)	
Fiscal Compact	Fiscal Compact	Less frequently called 'Patto di bilancio europeo'
Single Resolution Mechanism	Meccanismo di risoluzione unico/Meccanismo unico di risoluzione	
Unified Patent Court	Tribunale unificato dei brevetti (TUB)	
DI Instances – external integration		
European Economic Area	Spazio Economico Europeo/Area Economica Europea	
Customs Union + Turkey	Unione doganale dell'Unione europea / Unione doganale tra Unione europea e Turchia	
Eastern Partnership	Partenariato orientale	
Euromed	Partenariato euro-mediterraneo	

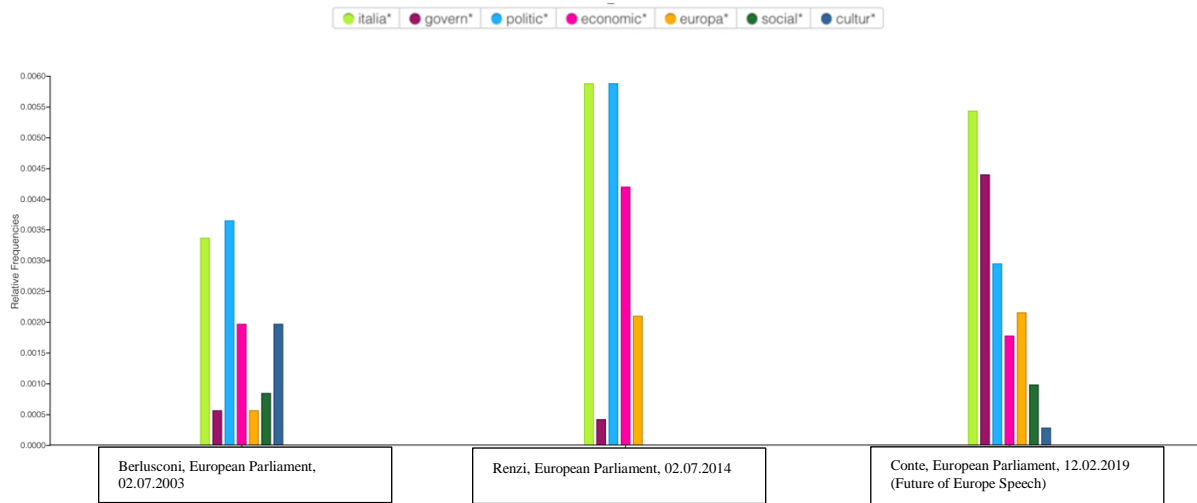
Appendix 3 The salience of EU-related issues in government programmes (relative word frequencies)



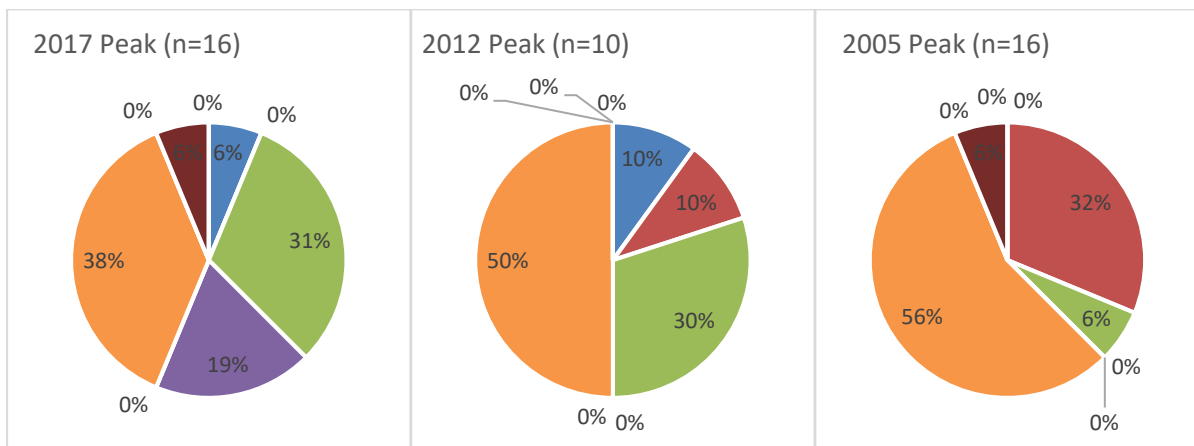
Appendix 4 Prime minister first speeches in the Italian parliament, 2001-2019



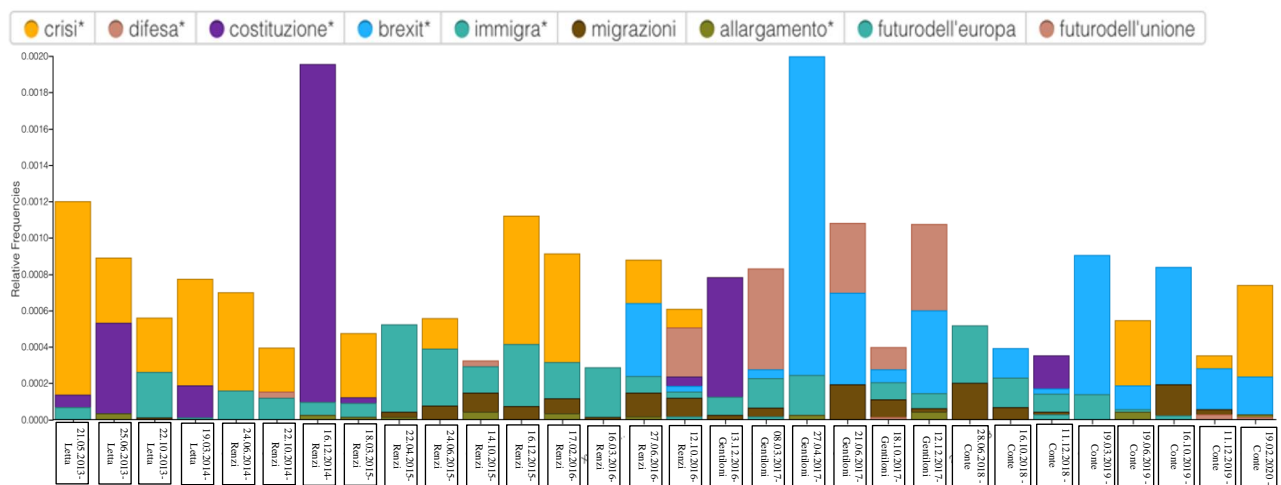
Appendix 5 Prime minister speeches in the European Parliament on the occasion of taking over the presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2003 and 2014



Appendix 6 The salience of conceptual key words in parliamentary debates – breakdown by key word



Appendix 7 Salient topics in European Council statements (2013-2020)



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