



Euroscepticism in Central Europe

*A recent phenomenon caused by the
misrecognition of Central Europe?!*

Bachelor Thesis

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Abstract

The notion of what refers to *Central Europe* remains quite debated amongst scholars since one cannot easily draw administrative borders and simultaneously neglect the crucial historical backgrounds of the particular countries. Central Europe, as not just a geographic but much more cultural region, is in such a way sophisticated and complex that it must indeed be analysed in full detail in terms of a holistic approach. By means of this Bachelor Thesis it shall be analysed how the EU is ultimately recognising Central Europe and rehabilitating its Communist legacy. Correspondingly, the focus will turn to possible explanations of Central European Euroscepticism that has particularly started to develop in Central Europe after 2006/2007, thus after a few years of EU membership – An indicator of not being taken seriously? Being denied? The central research question of this paper is thus as follows: *To what extent has the misrecognition of Central Europe led to an increasing level of Central European Euroscepticism since the Eastern Enlargement in 2004?* In order to find an answer to this question, this research project follows a completely novel approach in revealing the notion of Euroscepticism at the elite level, in opposition to former scholars who have merely analysed public opinion polls, survey results and socio-economic aspects regarding Euroscepticism on the mass-level.

Keywords: *Central Europe; Euroscepticism; Communist legacy; Recognition Struggle*

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1. Introduction

“This is crossing the Rubicon, after which there will be no more sovereign States in Europe [...]. Basic things will be decided by a remote ‘federal government’ in Brussels and, for example, Czech citizens will be only a tiny particle whose voice and influence will be almost zero. [...] We are against a European Superstate.”

- Czech President Vaclav Klaus, 2003

1.1 Background

Euroscepticism has become a widespread attitude across Europe and reflects an integral part of many European societies (Usherwood & Startin, 2013). The emerging ‘opposition to the European Union’ (EU) has already been acknowledged, yet the EU continuously fails to achieve its originally declared goals of the *Laeken Declaration*¹ in 2001 and does not manage to enhance EU-wide support amongst citizens (Usherwood & Startin, 2013, p.7). The above mentioned statement by the former Czech President Vaclav Klaus is fairly characteristic since it reveals many feelings, ranging from mistrust and fear to detestation and anger amongst the Central European elite before the Eastern Enlargement in 2004. The main concern of most politicians alike the Czech president was that originally fully sovereign States might lose their powers and soon become a small and minor part of an omnipresent and bureaucratic EU apparatus (de Wilde & Trenz, 2012).

Some scholars argue that there are different forms of Euroscepticism, ranging from soft forms – the mere critique of certain policies - to hard forms representing the outright rejection of the European project as such (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2004). Therefore, one might also observe regional differences in the characteristics of Euroscepticism within the EU. In my opinion, especially Central European Member States (CEMS) are of high interest since they simultaneously gained membership as part of the massive Eastern EU Enlargement² in 2004 and clearly possess an outstanding history (Wandycz, 2001). To date, many scholars have examined the mass-level in terms of support towards the EU, trust in institutions and the question of identity (Hooghe, 2007; McLaren, 2007). Some others even specified Euroscepticism in Central Europe but mostly focused on pre-accession times, that is, before 2004 (mostly during 1996 – 2003). For instance, Szczerbiak (2001) elaborates on declining

¹ The *Laeken Declaration* was a result of the EU Summit in 2001, held in Laeken/ Belgium, in which one of the main goals for an enhanced EU future was amongst others to bring the EU (institutions) closer to its citizens, in order to strengthen public support towards the EU (EU Council, 2001, p.19-23).

² In 2004, ten (10) new Member States joined the European Union: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Malta & Cyprus (for further reading: Commission, 2013a).

public support in Poland before the accession in 2004 and explains it with socio-economic fears due to harsh accession conditions imposed by the EU (Szczerbiak, 2001). Besides this, some scholars have elaborated on party-based Euroscepticism and tried to draw comparative lessons from the old MS like Great Britain (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2001). However, since the ultimate causes of Euroscepticism potentially fail to get identified by standardised surveys carried out by Eurobarometer, for instance, the author of this thesis follows a different, if not novel approach and aims at thoroughly analysing Euroscepticism on the basis of substantial qualitative data. Thereby, it challenges the work of other scholars who examined Euroscepticism on the mass-level. Toomey (2007) was potentially the first who elaborated on the distinction between mass- and elite-level Euroscepticism. He argued that Euroscepticism is remarkably higher amongst the political elite than amongst the public in Central Europe. Accordingly, this thesis builds upon this distinction and resumes the analysis of elite-level Euroscepticism.

1.2 Research Question(s)

The overall goal of this Bachelor Thesis is to further illustrate the potential relationship between the political recognition³ of Central Europe's Communist legacies and Central European Euroscepticism. In essence, it is not intended to verify a scientific relationships between variables - as it would have been done in quantitative research on the basis of survey results - but instead to follow a novel and holistic approach that aims at revealing a further factor of Euroscepticism, namely the perceived feeling of being denied and not taken seriously amongst the elite-level. As a result, this thesis simultaneously brings justice to the complexity of Central Europe's identity. The central research question of this paper is therefore as follows: ***To what extent has the misrecognition of Central Europe led to an increasing level of Central European Euroscepticism since the Eastern Enlargement in 2004?*** In order to incrementally analyse the central question, two relevant sub-questions have been set up. These relevant sub-questions are as follows:

1. *To what extent can one observe a recognition struggle of Communist legacies in Central Europe?*

³ Whereas *public recognition* often refers to public gestures (i.e. the famous knee-bending of Willy Brandt in Warsaw) and openly discussed attitudes concerning a certain topic, this thesis explicitly elaborates on the conception of *political recognition*, that is, the (mis-) recognition of Communist legacies in Central Europe by the EU.

The first sub-question is logically related to the first part of the analysis and aims at examining the perceived feeling of being denied by the EU. Therefore, several citations and quotes of different politicians and former dissidents will be analysed in terms of their contents. Furthermore, three cases of active denial by the EU will be examined and consequently illustrate where one can observe certain misrecognition. All in all, this question gives insights in the 'bad' side of this issue, pointing at necessary improvements.

2. *What has the EU done to recognise and rehabilitate crucial parts of Central European identity?*

The second sub-question intends to illustrate a different perspective and thus the 'good' side of the issue, namely the active rehabilitation process of Communist legacies by the EU. While analysing different resolutions of the European Parliament and multilateral declarations of the MS, it shall be argued that the EU has at least partly tried to bring justice to victims of Communist crimes, yet merely in the last years due to tremendous efforts of Central European MS. To conclude, this sub-question presents the contrasting part of the analysis and hence increases the authenticity and reliability of this paper.

1.3 Approach

In the remainder of this thesis a cross-national case study including Poland, the Czech Republic⁴ and Hungary will be conducted. Before turning to the analysis, the following chapter at first entails four conceptions that are intended to provide the necessary background knowledge and partly form the basis for consequent analyses. However, the forwarded historical events will not be used for the actual analysis but instead much more illustrate what actually refers to 'Communist Crimes against Humanity'. Accordingly, I will firstly elaborate on the notion of Central Europe and its inherent identity, before the theoretical approach shifts towards the 'Return to Europe' and the final inclusion of Central European States into the EU in 2004. Obviously, this approach depicts a chronological development from 'what refers to Central Europe' until full EU Membership. The fourth illustrated conception – Misrecognition & Euroscepticism – then represents the most recent and current stage of this chronology and forms the theoretical basis for the remainder of the thesis. The contextual analysis will make use of qualitative secondary data in terms of a content analysis based upon collected citations and quotes of former and current politicians

⁴ Some parts of the analysis refer to the former Czechoslovakia which lasted till the peaceful dissolution in 1993, the year in which the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic became independent States (Hilde, 1999).

(i.e. National Ministers & MEPs) and several anti-Communist dissidents. These data are used to examine the denial of a Communist legacy of Central Europe by the EU and reveal the unfortunate truth about how the EU deals with acknowledging crucial European history. On the other hand, relevant resolutions provided by the European Parliament and multilateral declarations concerned with the reconciliation and acknowledgment of Communist crimes in Central Europe will be forwarded. Obviously, the latter two data sources – EP resolutions and declarations – serve as the contrasting part of my analysis and point out what already has been done to commemorate communist crimes in Central Europe. This two-sided and contrasting examination will certainly make my research more reliable and authentic in the end. Lastly, a concluding chapter will sum up the main findings and mention the corresponding answers to the sub-questions and the central question of this research project, respectively. Moreover, some suggestions for further investigations in this research field will be specified, while pointing at implications of the analysis and prospects of the EU.

2. Theorizing Euroscepticism in Central Europe

The second chapter of this thesis is intended to familiarise the reader with the conceptual background that forms the essential basis of the actual analysis. Therefore, four different notions will be further illustrated: The 'Discourse of Central Europe', the 'Return to Europe', the 'Final Inclusion into the EU' and most prominently the 'Recognition Struggle of Central Europe'.

2.1 The Discourse of Central Europe

The idea of Central Europe is a much debated notion that has experienced a re-birth of its meaning with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Kundera, 1984; Rupnik, 1990). Okey states that there has always been a clear distinction between West and East Europe, yet the conception of Central Europe fully destroys this simple picture (Okey, 1992). However, one firstly has to distinguish between the idea of Central Europe and Naumann's contested conception of *Mitteleuropa*⁵. Amongst others, Rupnik (1990) argues that the basic idea behind *Mitteleuropa* was the extension of the German sphere of influence "from Rhine to the Danube" or "from Berlin to Baghdad" (p. 257). Accordingly, this notion entailed mistrust and fear amongst Polish or Czech peoples. Regarding Central Europe it is the constant alteration of its borders, i.e. due to the influential times of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire or the later clash of two totalitarian systems – Nazi-Germany vs. Soviet Union (SU) – that shaped the essence of this exceptional region (Judt, 1990; Kundera, 1984; Tieanu, 2013). According to Rupnik, Central Europe was solely independent during the Interwar period between 1918 and 1938, and even then it found itself in an unfortunate position, serving as a buffer zone between Stalinist Russia and an uprising social-nationalistic Germany (Rupnik, 1990).

One of the most important works regarding the notion of Central Europe is possibly Milan Kundera's 'Tragedy of Europe' (1984) which well explains the outstanding characteristics of this region. He argues that for Poles, Hungarians or Czechs it is fundamental to declare themselves as European and thereby Western; as soon as they became Eastern and part of the SU, they lose their identity (Kundera, 1984). Furthermore, Europe in general does not simply relate to a geographic region ranging from the Atlantic to the Ural Mountains but

⁵ In his book *Mitteleuropa* (1915), Friedrich Naumann promotes the idea of a federation of European States under German leadership. This geopolitical bloc was supposed to integrate the German and Austro-Hungarian Empire in order to foster the economy and to create a new and stable European order (DEUFRAMAT, n.d.)

represents much more a common cultural identity and “spiritual notion synonymous with the word ‘West’” (Kundera, 1984, p. 35). Thus, during the Cold War, Central Europeans were culturally located in the West yet politically in the East – it was hence predictable that this situation would not last forever. Therefore, the various uprisings, mass demonstrations and attempted revolutions during Soviet occupation were not just an act against communist regime but even more a struggle for their European identity.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s, the important rediscovery of Central Europe and the inherent identity took place. The old distinction between West and East Europe was no longer valid and vanished (Okey, 1992; Rupnik, 1990). To conclude, Central Europe represents the clear dissociation from the East, from the rejected ‘Otherness’ named Russia (Tieanu, 2013) and entails an independent Central European identity that is directed towards the West (Kumar, 1992).

2.2 The Return to Europe

The cultural and political transition of post-Soviet States at the end of the 20th century, that is, the turning back to the original roots of i.e. Poles, Czechs, Hungarians towards Europe, was often accompanied by popular slogans like the “rebirth of Central Europe” or “the return to Europe” (Hagen, 2003). This liberating return after a forty-five-years period of incapability to identify oneself with the ‘Western’ values – e.g. rule of law, democracy and the *Dichter and Denker Wesen* – due to the iron curtain and the forced identification with the East, represented quite a relief for most Central Europeans after the many violent and awful uprisings during Soviet occupation (Kumar, 1989; Blokker 2008).

The conception of the *return to Europe* has its origins in the early 1990s and was firstly accelerated by general movements of turning away from the rejected East and moving back to the “European values, history and culture” (Hagen, 2003, p.504). In that regard, the return to Europe mirrored first steps towards the integration into the European Community⁶ (EC), albeit no one mentioned actual EC accession yet (Judt, 1990; Blokker, 2008). As Blokker further argues, this period was purely characterised by the presence of a “national question” and “re-definition of collective identities” amongst the Central European population (Blokker, 2008, p. 260). However, it was the redefinition of national identities, based on a

⁶ Predecessor of the European Union (EU) until 1992, the year in which the Maastricht Treaty formally incorporated the European Communities into the European Union its newly invented pillar structure. However, this pillar structure was officially abolished with the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. For further reading see: EU Council (n.d.).

European identity, which confirmed the public perception of clearly belonging to Europe rather than to the mere periphery of European continent (Agh, 1991). As the return to Europe was just a first notion after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and yet far away from integration into the EC, the Central European States organised themselves and found the Visegrád Group⁷ which comprises the Czechoslovakia⁸, Poland and Hungary. This first regional cooperation between States was intended to lower the State's vulnerability and to initiate closer political and economic integration like a Central European Free Trade Area, for instance (Hagen, 2003). Nonetheless, as one of the implicit and long-term goals of the Visegrád Four was always the return to Europe, the EC and the Visegrád Group increasingly converged, started accession negotiations and paved the way for the region's final integration into the EU which will be examined in the following section (Henderson, 2005).

2.3 Euphoria - The Final Inclusion into the EU

The final return to Europe - 'back home' to the origins of their cultural identity - symbolised a break with the former Communist bloc and earmarked a predominant Euphoria in Central European States. After the break of the Warsaw Pact in 1991, Central and Eastern European States incrementally moved towards the EC/EU, started to conclude 'Association Agreements (AA)'⁹ and soon began to discuss the newly established Copenhagen Criteria¹⁰ of 1993 in order to open membership negotiations. Poland and Hungary already started negotiating AAs in 1991 whereas the other two Visegrád Group MS just started concluding their AAs in 1993 in order to conclude free trade areas and to boost their economies. Consequently, Poland and Hungary officially applied for EU membership at the Commission in 1994, followed by Slovakia (1995) and the Czech Republic in 1996 (for detailed information regarding the specific dates and different accession processes, see: EUROPA, 2007).

⁷ The *Visegrád Group* or also called *Visegrád Four* or simply *V4* is an alliance of Central European States for the purpose of promoting European integration as well as furthering military, economic and energy cooperation amongst its Member States. N.B.: The Visegrád Group has not been abolished with the EU accession in 2004 and still operates within the EU in order to strengthen regional cooperation in Central Europe.

⁸ After 1993, the two independent States of Slovakia and the Czech Republic became full members of the Visegrád Four.

⁹ *Association Agreements (AAs)* have the intention of forming close economic and political cooperation with potential accession States. The legal basis for these agreements is Article 217 TFEU that highlights the concluding parties' reciprocal rights and obligation. AAs are often used as a first step before accessions agreements because they already imply a lot of close cooperation provisions, for instance the 'Most Favoured Nation Principle' which forms the basis for free trade agreements.

¹⁰ *The Copenhagen Criteria* were established by the European Summit 1993 and declare substantial accession criteria that an applicant State must fulfil in order to become member of the EU (for the full list of criteria see: Commission, 2012).

As all formal aspects had been settled by the year of 2004, that is, as soon as the Copenhagen Criteria including the *Acquis Communautaire*¹¹ had been approved, the biggest EU enlargement to date, comprising an enormous number of ten (10) Central and Eastern European States that simultaneously gained membership of the Union, took place. This step certainly illustrates the final return to Europe and marked a crucial event in European history. This enlargement is not just outstanding due to its enormous number of new MS, but also fairly symbolic for the re-unification of Europe. As Verheugen puts it, “Europeans have [finally] decided to overcome their old divisions and create a zone of lasting peace and prosperity. The vision of a united Europe has finally become a reality” (Verheugen, 2001, p.1).

2.4 Misrecognition and Euroscepticism

In the context of this paper, I will use the original notion of a recognition struggle by Hegel (1807) and others like Taylor (1992) and adapt its main aspects to the discourse of Central Europe.

One of the most relevant works regarding the concept of recognition (*Anerkennung*) is provided by the German philosopher Friedrich Hegel[†]. He discussed the concept of mutual recognition (*Gegenseitige Anerkennung*) of human beings which according to him is necessary to develop a proper self-consciousness. Further, recognition of the ‘Other’ is essential for an ‘ethical life’ in which praise, acceptance and respect are predominant (Hegel, 1807). Two scholars have re-evaluated the original Hegelian concept of recognition in the early 1990s – (Honneth, 1995; Taylor, 1992). As Taylor (1992, p.98) has famously stated, “our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others”. Therefore it is inalienable to honour and dignify the identity of surrounding peoples in order to become a truly approved person oneself. Additionally, Honneth argues that “we owe our integrity [...] to the receipt of approval or recognition from other persons” (Honneth, 1995, p. 188). Yet, he follows a different approach that partly links to Hegel’s original concept. He states that identity formation can only be achieved through self-confidence, self-esteem and self-respect. These three modes in turn can “only be acquired [...] through being granted recognition by others whom one also recognises” (Honneth, 1995, p. 11). Generally, all scholars elaborating on this fairly old and sophisticated notion

¹¹ French: *Community Acquis*; constitutes the main body of EU law - comprising all the primary principles, court decisions and legislative acts the EU has agreed upon so far (Commission, 2013b).

agree upon the fact that mutual recognition is inevitable and necessary for the people's inner perception of an identity or cultural belonging (Fraser, 1998; Hegel, 1807; Honneth, 1995; Taylor, 1992).

It is one of the central questions of this thesis whether the EU is properly acknowledging and rehabilitating the Communist legacy of Central Europe. But how is this causally related to Euroscepticism? According to Hooghe and Marks (2007), who elaborated on the fundamental sources of Euroscepticism, what matters most for attitudes towards Europe is how an individual conceives his own identity, for instance, in exclusive or inclusive terms. As Riishoj (2007) further argues, the [European] people have to get the feeling of being equal with each other and thus being part of a common community. In this respect, Taylor and Honneth's way of argumentation fits perfectly as they argue that an individual needs to be recognised by his environment and the corresponding 'other' in order to develop proper self-esteem and an identity. Therefore, in the context of this paper I assume that the feeling of not being fully recognised or even denied by the supranational EU can cause the empowerment of solely nationalistic thoughts of people who will refuse the EU in the end. Hence, Euroscepticism is not just a product of economic fears but also emerges on the basis of identity loss. It is thus highly important for Central Europeans that their distinctive identity gets recognised and verified by others, in this case EU elites, since otherwise they will lose their identity (Fraser, 1998; Taylor, 1992). Therefore the causal relationship assumed in the remainder of this thesis is as follows: The struggle for recognition and potential misrecognition is causing a sceptical if not opposing attitude towards the EU through the prevalence of ignorance on the EU-level. In the following, three distinct historical events will serve as illustrations for the Communist legacies of Central Europe that certainly need to be recognised, rehabilitated and commemorated by the EU: The *Katyn Massacre* (1940) in Poland, the *Hungarian Revolution* in 1956 and the *Prague Spring* (1968) in Czechoslovakia.

2.4.1 The Katyn Massacre 1940

The term of the Katyn Massacre nowadays generally refers to a series of mass executions in Smolensk, Kozelsk, Starobelsk, Ostashkov, Kharkiv and other ex-Soviet cities in April – May 1940. Stalin instructed his secret police – the NKVD (*Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del*¹²) – to kill about 14,700 Polish police officers taken from three prisoner of war camps in Kozelsk, Starobelsk and Ostashkov. At the same time another 7,300 officers who were also

¹² Russian: 'The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs'.

“found to be enemies of the Soviet Union” were killed in NKVD prisons in Belarus and the Ukraine adding up to a death toll of 22,000. In this paper the main focus explicitly lies on the Katyn Forest Massacre that took place near the Russian city of Smolensk in May 1940. Out of the 14,700 officers a remarkable number of 4,400 officers who were imprisoned in Kozelsk were transported to, respectively killed and buried in the Katyn forest (Sanford, 2007, pp.1-3). The mass grave in Katyn was firstly found by Nazi-German troops in 1943 who directly blamed the Soviet Union for this crime, also intending to weaken the Western Allies - however in turn the SU instantly blamed the Nazis for the massacre. Although Roosevelt and Churchill were well informed by their own sources about this tragedy and potentially knew the truth, the British and Americans refused “to take the slightest risk of jeopardising the Red Army’s [...] contribution to the Allied war effort against Germany” (Sanford, 2007, p.2). As not just military staff but also many other Poles belonging to the Polish Intelligentsia¹³ were deported to Russian Gulags¹⁴, tortured and executed with a shot in the back of their heads, in total about 24,000 people were killed at the end of this operation (Sanford, 2007; Sterio, 2011). An explanation of these massacres commanded by Stalin was the unimaginable aim of annihilating the whole Polish elite which according to Stalin would otherwise eventually develop to a future threat if Poland had become an independent State after WW2 again.

The massacre of 1940 has long been denied till it got finally re-discovered and investigated by an US Commission of Inquiry during the Cold War. Yet, the Soviet Union constantly refused any form of confession until the 13th of April in 1990 when the former SU president Mikhail Gorbachev finally admitted Soviet responsibility for the tremendous massacre (Cienciala et al., 2008; Sanford, 2007). This historical incident has amongst others tremendously shaped the Polish-Russian political relationship and an appropriate commemoration by the EU would have been of high importance.

2.4.2 The Hungarian Uprising in 1956

The Hungarian Revolution in autumn 1956 was a sudden but nationwide uprising against the ruling government and the politics of Soviet influence. It all started with a peaceful student movement in Budapest that forwarded a list of 16 demands for reforms and more political freedoms (Matthews, 2007). However, some students were arrested and violent acts by the

¹³ Refers to the educated and professional Polish elite, that is: police officers, engineers, doctors, lawyers, etc.

¹⁴ Gulags were Russian forced labour camps, comparable with Nazi concentration camps, which served as an instrument to secure the Communist system and lasted until the late 1950s.

police (usage of tear gas and firings against students who tried to release the arrested students) led to the deaths of many protestors. Subsequently, the revolts spread across Hungary and the government soon collapsed. After two months of unrest and violence across the country, the SU statesman Nikita Khrushchev ordered Soviet troop intervention on the 4th of November 1956 which lasted only six days until the Red Army had fully controlled all parts of Hungary (Litván, Bak, Legters, Schöpflin, & Kende, 1996). The results were mass arrests, denunciations, executions and 200,000 Hungarian refugees. The violent defeat of the Hungarian revolution by Soviet troops has widely been identified as one of the darkest moments in Cold War time. Already in January of 1957 the SU had finally suppressed all political opposition and successfully stopped the revolution.

Even though the revolution - which in total cost about 20,000 lives - in essence, had failed for that moment, its aftermaths were very influential and paved the way for a democratic future of Hungary (Lendvai, 2010; Thompson, 2002). In the following decades the happenings marked the starting point of the incremental downfall of the Soviet Union in Central and Eastern Europe. Also this historical event has been a taboo for more than 30 years until the late 1980s when the provisional president Mátyás Szurös finally declared the fully independent and democratic 'Third Hungarian Republic' and Mikhail Gorbachev officially apologised for the Soviet intervention in December 1991. This event is just another part of Central Europe's Communist legacies and the EU is obliged to rehabilitate and recognise the latter when it publicly speaks of a common European heritage. The denial of these events, illustrating Communist crimes against humanity is unacceptable for Central Europeans. The analysis will unfold to what extent Central European elites perceive misrecognition in this regard.

2.4.3 The Prague Spring of 1968

The reform movement of 1968, also known as the Prague Spring, originally started on the 5th of January 1968 with the election of Alexander Dubcek as the First Secretary of the then ruling Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ). His attempts of de-Stalinisation firstly included the liberalisation of the state-directed economy in order to tackle the tremendous economic crisis. Further, he aimed at democratising the political system with granting more political freedoms, i.e. freedom of speech, press- and travel- freedom and wanted to decentralise administrative authorities to dignify ethnical minorities (Navrátil, 1998; Williams, 1997). Despite the successful implementation of those far-reaching political and

economic reforms, Dubcek assured Moscow that Czechoslovakia would stay in the Warsaw Pact and reaffirmed their loyalty to the Soviet Union.

However, after several unsuccessful attempts of the SU to limit or even stop the process of reforms by means of negotiations (all reforms reflected 'anti-socialist trends' and the emergence of a 'bourgeois system' according to Soviet politicians), Leonid Brezhnev¹⁵, who led the negotiations, saw no other option than taking 'action instead of words' and sent an enormous number of 500,000 troops¹⁶ into Czechoslovakia. Soviet invasion on the 20th of August 1968 was again characterised by a fast and massive deployment of military personnel whereby it took only one day to occupy Czechoslovakia (Goodman, 1969). The invasion was mostly bloodless¹⁷ compared to the invasion of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, yet this event made clear with which strength and closeness the SU is fighting any attempt of revolutionary movements (Williams, 1997).

As a result, Dubcek was arrested, brought to Moscow and politically replaced by the pro-Soviet politician Gustav Husak. Furthermore, Dubcek's reforms were repealed and an authoritarian Communist regime was re-established. Thus, Soviet intervention had led to the halt of any reform movements, the full control over Czechoslovakia with the establishment of a pro-Soviet government and military presence in Czechoslovakia until 1991 (Navrátil, 1998; Williams, 1997). This historical event has reassured the opinion that Central and Eastern Europe was granted no choice of leaving the Warsaw Pact and again unfolds the oppression of Central European citizens. As such, this happening has ultimately affected citizens' identification and is worth being rehabilitated by the EU.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has conceptualised the four most important notions which aim at providing the fundamental basis for the main analysis. It has been illustrated that Central Europe is not just a geographic region but much more a historically and culturally shaped area (Judt, 1990;

¹⁵ Former General Secretary of the Central Committee of the SU Communist Party; his name became famously connected to the *Brezhnev Doctrine*, a Soviet Foreign Policy that stated: "When forces that are hostile to socialism try to turn the development of some socialist country towards capitalism, it becomes not only a problem of the country concerned, but a common problem and concern of all socialist countries.". This doctrine was amongst others retrospectively used to justify the invasion of the Prague Spring (Ouimet, 2003).

¹⁶ A military bloc of Warsaw Pact Armed Forces was arranged, including the Soviet Union, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary.

¹⁷ Approximately 550 people were wounded and 105 killed during the invasion; Accordingly, a low number caused by the fact that Czechoslovak troops and civilians resigned and showed no resistance on advice of Dubcek.

Kundera, 1984; Rupnik, 1990; Tianeau, 2013). Moreover, CEMS possess an outstanding history - characterised by a Communist legacies that ought to be reconciled and commemorated on the EU-level. Mass revolts and tremendous struggles against Communism illustrate this recognition struggle (Blokker, 2008; Tianeau, 2013). Central European identity has obviously experienced a reactivation during the late 1980s and the final collapse of the Soviet Union (Hagen, 2003; Kumar, 1989). As earlier mentioned, the scholarly described *re-birth of Central Europe* and the inherent *return to Europe* (Henderson, 2005) were simultaneously a step towards Western Europe and the former European Community. By the year of 2004, Central European States had finally fulfilled all the necessary criteria and had gone through numerous rounds of accession negotiations in order to become full members of the European Union. However, although the support towards EU accession was quite high amongst Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary before 2004 (Taggart, 2001; Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2001), the support began to decrease after the accession and thereby turned into Euroscepticism.

In the subsequent sections of this thesis, it will be analysed whether the EU has actively started to rehabilitate Communist legacies of Central Europe or instead denied the existence of the latter and blocked the remembrance process. In addition, some important speeches, interviews and public hearings will be analysed and the extracted citations reveal the recognition struggle of Communist legacies amongst Central European elites. The latter insights will eventually unfold a potential explanation of the increasing level of Euroscepticism at the elite level since 2004 and simultaneously reveal whether CEMS have indeed become imminent and powerful Member States since their accession (in terms of unofficial negotiating powers besides the official votes) or if they were in the end condemned to serve as a 'little China'¹⁸ for the economically strong Western MS.

¹⁸ *Little China* is a non-scientific notion that has firstly been issued by sceptical Central European citizens before the EU accession in 2004. The major fear was potential cheap labour exploitation by modern Western European economies like those of the Netherlands, France and Germany. The conception has recently grown in importance - especially amongst social policy researchers - with the accession of the Balkan States like Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 and Croatia in 2014.

3. Methodology

In order to establish a differentiated analysis, it first has to be illustrated how the researcher wishes to approach the central question of the paper. Therefore, this chapter intends to familiarise the reader with the methodological considerations of this bachelor thesis. For the actual analysis it is first necessary to select an appropriate research design that indicates the general path of the research. Furthermore, it will be argued and justified which countries have been selected before the focus turns to the explanation of data collection methods and the intended data analysis. Lastly, some concluding remarks will be mentioned and finish this section of the thesis.

3.1 Research Design

The central question of this paper will be answered by conducting a qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data basically refers to any non-quantified data, that is, amongst others visual, auditive and textual data in terms of interviews, documents, scientific articles, documentaries, movies, EU policies et cetera. The research design of this paper can best be explained as a cross-national case study that is based on a document analysis regarding the qualitative data mentioned below. Fortunately, this design simultaneously conducts a comparison between Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. According to Gerring (2011) a case study represents “the intensive study of a single case for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units (a population)” (p. 411). Furthermore, in a different book Gerring argues that the use of a case study indicates that the researcher is aiming at a holistic and comprehensive approach of the phenomenon, which is ethnographic, non-experimental, non-survey-based and historical in essence (Gerring, 2007, p. 17). Thus, a case study is potentially the best research design in this context since it enables me to conduct an in-depth research regarding Central European Member States.

3.2 Country Selection

In order to conduct the contemplated cross-national case study three Central European Member States have been selected: Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Instead of being randomly selected, those three countries were indeed intentionally selected. Poland has been selected due to its very Central position in Europe/ the EU and its sophisticated history (Wandycz, 2001). Having experienced a constant alteration of national borders and being formerly located between two totalitarian systems it is fairly interesting to see how

Poland perceives certain misrecognition by the EU. In addition, Poland is a quite antithetic example since on the mass-level the Polish population is highly supportive towards EU membership and further EU integration, albeit one can also observe some decreasing trends in this respect, whereas on the elite-level there is a higher level of Euroscepticism (Toomey, 2007). Secondly, the Czech Republic is of interest as the Czech citizens have long struggled with their national identity, which is not least illustrated by the peaceful Velvet revolution and the subsequent dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993. Also in this context, the constant change of national borders and the struggle of regional minorities - which amongst others is the results of influential times of the Habsburg Monarchy for instance – have played a crucial role in the selection of this State (Kundera, 1984). Lastly, Hungary is worth being analysed since it also represents a State whose citizens are seeking for a certain identity. Being partially part of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, one can at times still perceive the influence of Austrian and German philosophers, politicians and socio-political luminaries (Batt, 2002; Hagen, 2003). Additionally, Hungary is certainly facing the issue of uprising fascism and emerging nationalistic thoughts and thus remains highly Eurosceptic at the mass- and elite-level, illustrated by the increase of elected right-wing parties (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2004). To conclude, all the aforementioned countries are doubtless the ones who represent a Central European identity the most, whereby the notion of national identification seems to play a crucial role.

3.3 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The conception of Euroscepticism, potentially caused by the EU's denial of Central Europe's Communist legacy, will be analysed on the basis of several data sets. On the one hand, several speeches, interviews and public hearings of the last years after the EU Eastern Enlargement in 2004 have been selected and analysed. That is, several quotes and citations have been extracted from the original speeches and interviews in order to make up a fully new collection¹⁹ of related quotes that reveal indicators of a recognition struggle. These indicators are firstly measured by the mere content of the quote, the inherent meaning, the latent tone (i.e. the use of words) and the intention. The spokespersons were intentionally selected from different political backgrounds in order to analyse a wider picture of the political spectrum. Accordingly, both rather national-conservative but also quite liberal politicians have been selected. A further criterion of selection was the spokesperson's

¹⁹ The collection of all indicated quotes can be found in Appendix 1.

impact on the European Union, that is, EP membership, Commission membership etc. Additionally, cultural elites like former anti-Communist dissidents form part of the analysis since these persons have played a crucial role in national identification processes. On the other hand, topic-related resolutions by the European Parliament of the years 2005, 2008 and 2009 plus multilateral declarations established between EU Member States have been examined. As indicated, the latter will serve as the contrasting part of the analysis. For the purpose of this thesis, all major searching engines – both scientific and non-scientific ones, i.e. Google Scholar, The ISI Web of Science and Scopus Library, have been used for finding academic articles, texts of speeches and interviews as well as the mentioned EP resolutions.

It is noteworthy that this research does not follow an ordinary method of data analysis for several reasons. Instead a quite different and probably novel approach to the analysis of Euroscepticism has been elaborated. All the selected data, that is, citations, quotes, EU resolutions and declarations have been analysed in terms of their contents and intended meanings. For the analysis I will incrementally use the selected quotes and point at the underlying tone of each speaker. In most quotes one can either observe an obvious message or a subliminal, more latent meaning on the basis of selected words by the protagonist; hence I assume that every spoken sentence in a speech has a prevalent undertone that is even unintentionally forwarded by the speaker to the one who is supposed to receive that message. Analysing quotes and citations of several persons seems fuzzy and indistinguishable on the first sight, yet the analysis will show that it is striking to what extent the examination of these quotes can depict a general trend that is indeed predominant amongst these intellectual elites – namely a perception of being ignored and denied. Secondly, in order to reveal some cases of active denial of Central European States by the EU the author will state all major acts and decisions by EU institutions that indicate an obvious attitude of misrecognition. For instance, the Commission's decision to reject Central European calls for criminalising the denial of Communist crimes, which is evidence for a prevailing recognition struggle.

With regard to the second – contrasting – part of this thesis, namely the EP resolutions and MS' declarations of acknowledgment, I analysed the declared goals and potential achievements of these documents in essence. That is, I looked at what has specifically been stated in the resolutions and what implications these statements will ultimately have for

Central European States. As a result, these resolutions eventually reveal the EU's acknowledgement and proper recognition of CEMS' distinctive legacy.

To conclude, the resolutions, respectively declarations as such will unfold what the EU is currently implementing in order to bring justice to victims of Communist crimes in Central Europe and be analysed vis-à-vis the perceived denial of CE politicians and other examined intellectuals. After having scrutinised the aforementioned data sets, the author of this thesis aims at giving appropriate answers to the sub-questions before turning to the central question of this paper.

3.5 Concluding Remarks

This section has illustrated which analytical approach the author wishes to apply in the remainder of this bachelor thesis. Additionally, it has been elaborated on the main research design - a cross-national case study - which will pave the way for the following analysis. Besides this, this section has also provided an explanation and justification of the selection procedure of Central European intellectuals whose speeches will form a major part of the analysis. Lastly, it has been argued that an ordinary method of data collection is possibly not applicable in this context, whereby I decided to examine an advanced method of data analysis in order to track the roots of elite-level Euroscepticism in Central Europe.

4. Analysing the Misrecognition of Central Europe

After having conceptualised Central European Euroscepticism and introduced the contextual backgrounds of Central Europe on the basis of the *Return to Europe* and the revelation of a *Central European identity*, we now turn to the actual analysis of this research project. As already indicated above, this section shall shed some light in the deeper roots of Euroscepticism in Central Europe. For the analysis it is crucial to keep in mind how fundamental it is for Central Europeans to declare themselves as being both geographically and culturally located within the inner centre of Europe and not belonging to the peripheries or even worse the environment of Russia – in fact Central Europeans accept to be everything but Eastern and clearly distinguish themselves from the rejected East. Furthermore, it is striking to what extent the tremendous historical events during Cold War times, i.e. the aforementioned Katyn massacre and the violent defeat of several uprisings and revolutions across the Soviet Union have shaped the national, regional and individual identities of these peoples. The following analysis is twofold: Firstly it will be elaborated on the several calls for EU acknowledgments of ‘Communist Crimes against Humanity’ in Central Europe. That is, the thesis intends to reveal how Central European States – particularly their political and societal elites – have since their accession in 2004 constantly attempted to bring attention to their history. Secondly, the analysis turns to the description of what the EU has recently done in order to recognise Central Europe and its identity and to what extent one can observe serious efforts by EU officials to tackle the concealment of a distinct Central European history. This paragraph eventually concludes that the EU has not completely failed to rehabilitate Central European history, yet still lacks major parts of an appropriate rehabilitation of Central European heritage.

4.1 Indicators of a Recognition Struggle

At first sight the comparison between fascism and communism seems inapplicable and false. Yet, both Fascism and Stalinist Communism represent totalitarian systems in which hardly any democratic aspects prevail and are thus two of the same kind. Obviously both forms mark a crucial part of the ‘common European heritage’ which the EU often refers to. However, amongst scholars it has widely been discussed to what extent the EU is actually rehabilitating these different parts of European history. Loytomaki (2014) argues that after the enlargement of 2004, ‘new politics of memory’ entered the Union, that is, with the accession of ex-socialist States the urgency of the remembrance of Communist

totalitarianism came to the front (Loytomaki, 2014). However, for these peoples firstly a surreal situation emerged in which tremendous numbers of war-crimes conducted by the Nazis, in particular the Holocaust, have become ever more acknowledged, commemorated and institutionalised whereas Communist crimes – which indeed represent the essence of Central European’s historical backgrounds – have been denied and hidden for many decades. One could argue that the *Return to Europe* as mentioned above has simultaneously marked the starting point of the rehabilitation of long-hidden Cold War crimes in Central European States by the manifold initiatives of the new member states, since it became only possible with the collapse of the SU to speak freely and commonly about what actually happened during former years of Soviet occupation.

In the following I will put forward some citations by the political and cultural elite of Central European MS, particularly Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, which have been derived from several events like public hearings in the European Parliament, public discussion rounds in the respective countries or miscellaneous speeches. The author intended to take spokespersons from different political backgrounds – ranging from the centre-left to the far right of the political spectrum. Obviously, this also entails a few risks for the analysis since quotes by populist and nationalistic politicians could eventually merely indicate a struggle for recognition of crimes committed by the Russian enemy, disregarding the wider importance of communist crimes against humanity in general. The latter however is supported by Europeanists like Schöpflin who support European identities and struggle for the recognition of crimes against the European values. Despite this potential issue the twofold analysis of citations will in the end reveal a better picture of the real-life situation in Central Europe and increase the reliability of the analysis with regard to Euroscepticism. After having analysed these quotes I will focus on three particular cases that reveal the EU as actively *denying* Central European identity.

4.1.1 Calls for Acknowledgments

Several politicians who represent their peoples on the national and EU-level have publicly stated their mistrust and disappointment of EU integration in Central Europe and highlighted their perception of being treated like second-class Member States. In addition, also some former dissidents and cultural elites like Vaclav Havel, György Schöpflin, Adam Michnik and György Konrad who all have tremendously suffered under the Communist regime, that is, being publicly pursued, sent to prison or forced labour camps, have always raised their

voices against Communist rule and incarnated the fight for a free democracy. They have certainly to a great extent enabled the fall of the iron curtain and thus introduced the end of Communist occupation. The following citations have all been selected from speeches, public hearings and interviews of the last six years and depict the recognition struggle of Central Europe.

I will start this paragraph with a quote of György Schöpflin, a former Hungarian dissident and contemporary MEP who said that *"99% never heard of the term Gulag"*. The 'Gulag' however is a term that affords fear, anger and horror amongst many Central Europeans. Furthermore, he stated that *"[...] the West regards this issue [of remembrance and historical rehabilitation] as irrelevant as it gets in the way of everyday business."* and this will in the end certainly *"eat away at East-West relations"* (Appendix 1). Schöpflin who is certainly pro-European and a supporter of European values, does not explicitly focus on the old enemy Russia but instead highlights the importance of remembrance for the sake of upholding European values. He unfolds his disappointment of the EU and argues that for the Union *"Communist crimes are less important than Nazi ones"* which is certainly a provocative but honest call towards Brussels. The Polish MEP and Christian Democrat Filip Kaczmarek supports this standpoint and calls for more remembrance since *"the more Europeans know about the true face of totalitarianism, the better it will be for the future of the European Union. [...] It is about understanding the dramatic consequences which came from and are still coming from totalitarian practices in many countries in Europe"*. Generally, Polish MEPs are the leading figures in calling for acknowledgment and commemoration, however many Polish MEPs belong to national-conservative parties that are often eurosceptic. As a result they are mostly concentrating on national issues and argue in a fairly nationalistic and aggressive anti-Russian manner and not with the intention of protecting European identities. Those rather nationalistic statements can also be found in the wording of certain politicians. For instance, MEP Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka who is member of the 'Union for Europe of the Nations' (UEN) – a highly national-conservative party in the EP – talks about the *"Soviet butchers"* and *"mass murders"*. No doubt that she is also calling for the rehabilitation of Communist crimes, yet the opinion prevails that her general intention is blaming the Russians for everything. Additionally, the conservative MEP Ewa Tomaszewska who is also member of the UEN states *"when I hear in this Chamber that the Communists are not prepared to hang their heads, despite the tens of millions of victims [...] (the Poles alone have to be counted in millions), and the sentencing of entire nations to death, for example the Crimean Tartars, I am*

astounded and outraged". It is indeed questionable if these politicians are in the end prepared to take a comparable standpoint and do not just follow right-wing identity politics. However, both aforementioned MEPs plus other Polish MEP like Filip Kaczmarek and Bogusław Sonik call for an European-wide remembrance day for 'heroes' who fought against totalitarianism and were willing to lose their lives in order to release their home countries. For instance, MEP Foltyn-Kubicka wants to *"recall a man who should become a symbol of an unshakeable attitude and resistance to totalitarians – Cavalry Captain Witold Pilecki. He voluntarily entered the Auschwitz extermination camp to organise the resistance movement and gather information about mass murders. He managed to escape, only to die several years later from a bullet in the back of the head, dispatched on the orders of Soviet butchers. I therefore also appeal once again for 25 May, the date of his execution, to be designated the International Day of the Heroes of the Fight Against Totalitarianism."* She highlights the overdue of the establishment of those days by illustrating what sort of days the EU is currently implementing, *"Yesterday in Parliament we celebrated the European Day of home-made ice cream. I repeat, we celebrated the European Day of home-made ice cream. I do not therefore understand why 25 May cannot be the day when we remember the heroes of the fight against totalitarianism."* Besides these rather right-wing politicians who might argue on a different basis, some other MEPs from Hungary who are currently member of the EPP, which operates in the political centre, find different words and focus on a Europeanist approach focusing on norms, values and attitudes just like Schöpflin and Havel for instance. Jozsef Szajer strengthens the appeal to all Europeans: *"A European cannot accept the fact that even today, even in this Parliament, there are people for whom the crimes of the Communist dictatorship are excusable and forgivable. A double standard distinguishing between victim and victim, crime and crime, suffering and suffering, death and death, is unacceptable"*. Furthermore, his national colleague and party affiliate László Tőkés adds that *"the European Community must abandon the double standard that is evident in the different ways in which Nazism and Communism have been judged. Both inhumane dictatorships deserve equal condemnation."* (Appendix 1). Similarly, Adam Michnik, a former Polish dissident and famous essayist, represents the advocates of European identities and puts it slightly different: *"It has the feeling that the Eastern European EU countries are already being treated as second-class members"* (Appendix 1). He again focuses on the European peoples and follows his *"high moral standards"*. Here, Schöpflin who also represents the Europeanists upholding European values even goes a step further and argues that it is

mostly due to the prevalence of political parties who hinder the equalisation process of Communist and Nazi crimes and are generally blocking an appropriate rehabilitation process of the past. He further states that *“without a thorough scrutiny of its past, the Left in some of the former Communist states is obliged – compels itself – to live with a false past, a past from which all sorts of painful events are screened out. This further forces the Left to protect this false past and thereby its democratic credibility is eroded. Seeing as the Western Left fully accepts this unreconstructed post-Communist Left as a legitimate partner, it too finds itself obliged to defend an indefensible past. Consequently, its own commitment to democracy is, to that extent, weakened”*. The conservative MEP Wojciech Roszkowski who is member of the UEN further complements this way of reasoning and states *“whoever today relativises the criminal character of totalitarianism, be it Nazi or Communist totalitarianism, stands in opposition to the traditions of a country ruled by law and to democracy. It is, by the way, characteristic that while the European Right does not relativise Nazi crimes today, the European Left does relativise Communist crimes”* (Appendix 1). Remarkably, in contrast to Schöpflin he is disregarding aspects of democratic credibility or the question of legitimate partnerships and instead much more attacks the political enemy - the leftist parties.

Besides the aforementioned Polish and Hungarian perspectives, also former Czech dissidents, Czech intellectuals and contemporary Czech MEPs argue that the EU has insufficiently rehabilitated the Communist legacy of Central Europe. A leading figure is certainly Vaclav Havel†, a former dissident and last President of the Czechoslovakia, who highlighted in one of his last speeches the urgency of proper European integration in terms of mutual cooperation: *“We are all in the same boat and that boat is steering a good course. And it will continue to do so, so long as all its passengers share the responsibility and do not play their own game and are follow their private interests”*. Just like Michnik or Schöpflin, Havel is a poet – someone who represents the traditional European *Dichter und Denker Wesen* and thus promotes a European identity with all its inherent norms and values. On the other hand, Alexandr Vondra – a former Czech Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence and foreign policy advisor to Vaclav Havel – finds some rather critical words towards the EU and the way it deals with Central Europe. He urgently calls for more rehabilitation and the establishment of a European-wide Platform for Commemoration²⁰ since “[we] owe it to

²⁰ This *Platform*, proposed by the Czech Presidency, has indeed been implemented, though in a different manner a few years later and now serves as a EU Platform at which several institutes are coordinating and cooperating remembrance of totalitarianism in Europe: see below in 4.2.

those who suffered as result of totalitarian crimes not just to remember their experience at the hands of overbearing and unaccountable state regimes, but also to confront the past collectively. Only by reconciling ourselves to history can we truly break away from the bonds imposed by the regimes of the past.” (Appendix 1).

To conclude, although the aforementioned citations and quotes are taken from different political backgrounds that ought to be considered, they all unfold a very clear picture: The Central European elite, both political and cultural ones, do not just call for more remembrance and European-wide rehabilitation of Central Europe’s Communist legacy but additionally also illustrate their perceived denial by the EU. Whilst reading the distinct quotes one soon recognises the slight undertone of the ultimate perception of being neglected as second-class and less important Member States. Therefore, I want to finish this section with a quote given by Ján Figel’, a Slovak Politician and former European Commissioner who highlights the integrity of the European peoples and said: *“We should create a European memory, a European fellowship [...] which prevents the return of totalitarianism and [...the] denial of its crimes. [Because] the denial of these crimes actually amounts to a relativisation not only of the truth but also of people.”* (Appendix 1).

4.1.2 Denial of Central Europe?!

The year of 2008 certainly marked the starting point of an enhanced de-communization²¹ process. Although this notion finds its origins with the return to Europe back in the early 1990s, the process experienced an enhancement in the year 2008 after four years of EU membership. Central Europeans gained political power and decided to precede their regional campaign of de-communization on the EU level. A distinct group of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) called for a European-wide ban of all Communism related symbols like different Communist party symbols, the red star and the hammer and sickle on flags for instance since the latter would clearly represent a reminder of the *“painful past”*. The idea behind this ban was the juristic equalisation with Nazi or fascist symbols which already have been prohibited for several decades. The main argument was that a coherent ban of all symbols related to any forms of totalitarian systems would indeed show that *“Europe condemns on equal terms the evils of Communism and Nazism”*. However, Franco Frattini who was at that time the Commissioner for Justice and received this proposal stated

²¹ The process of *de-communization* is commonly applied to the post-Soviet States which have after the fall of the iron curtain started to initiate several legal and social policies in order to rehabilitate the past by several trials, legal adjustments and investigations.

that an EU-wide ban of Communist symbols *“would be hard to explain and unwise if we tried to harmonise it at European level”* (BBC, 2008). The simple rejection of this proposal without elaborating on the actual reasons obviously reveals that the EU actively applies ‘double standards’ when it comes to rehabilitating history. As a result Poland for instance decided an equal ban of all totalitarian symbols just one year later in 2009 on its own, which entailed massive domestic political discussions whether this new law would in the end possibly diminish the political freedom of expression (Spiegel, 2009).

A second case that reveals a certain denial of Central Europe took place in 2010. Six Member States of the EU including the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary, urged an EU ban on the denial of Communist Crimes. In their joined letter to the former Commissioner for Justice Viviane Reding they highlighted that the denial of Communist crimes is obviously equal to the denial of Nazi crimes and *“[...] the denial of every international crime should be treated according to the same standards to prevent favourable conditions for the rehabilitation and rebirth of totalitarian ideologies”* (EUOBSERVER, 2010). One of the leading signees of the letter was the Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg who stated that *“there is a fundamental concern here that totalitarian systems [... must] be measured by the same standard”* and in his view the *“denial of the crimes of communism is completely comparable to denying the crimes of Nazism, which in many EU countries is a criminal offense”*. His co-signee, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Azubalis adds that *“everyone knows about the crimes of the Nazi regime, but only part of Europe is aware of the crimes of communism”* (Romea, 2010). As a result, this so-called double genocide law would in the end criminalise the denial of crimes perpetrated by Communist regimes alike the already existing ban on the denial of the Holocaust for instance (Guardian, 2010). However, on behalf of the Commission Viviane Reding simply rejected this urgent call by an Eastern bloc of EU MS. She argued that this matter would be too divergent across the EU and Brussels would in fact have no legal basis that allows to act. She elaborates on this opinion with pointing out that *“[...] the conditions to make a legislative proposal have not been met. [...] Yet] the commission will continue to keep this matter under review”*. It is certainly arguable whether this statement indeed shows the inability of acting or the mere unwillingness of using existing EU law that enables the ‘crafting of rules targeting racism and xenophobia’ (EUOBSERVER, 2010). In the end, an often used but yet contested argument has again been used in this case: *“For all the terrible crimes of the USSR,*

you can't compare the people who built Auschwitz with the people who liberated it. Nazi Germany would probably not have been defeated if it weren't for Russia" (Guardian, 2010).

The last case that is worth being analysed in this respect is directly related to the aforementioned Katyn Massacre of 1940 which has tremendously shaped Polish identity. In this case it is not really a denial of Central Europe but much more the betrayal of Poland by the international community. In 2012 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the Katyn Massacre was indeed a 'war crime' and the Soviet Union had violated the rights of thousands relatives of those Poles who were killed by Stalin's secret police in 1940. The ultimate ruling admits that: *"(The applicants) suffered a double trauma: losing their relatives in the war and not being allowed to learn the truth about their death for more than 50 years"* (Reuters, 2012). As already indicated in the theoretical section of this paper, the Soviet Union had not admitted responsibility until the 1990s and even then it continued denying it as a war crime. However, the actual Polish disappointment took place one year later in 2013 when relatives of the victims claimed that investigations of the massacre – in which approximately 22,000 military officers and intellectuals were killed – led by Russian authorities between 1990 and 2004 were 'inadequate' (Reuters, 2013). Accordingly, the court highlighted that it could not rule whether Russia has insufficiently investigated the Katyn Massacre since it "lacked jurisdiction to judge on the matter because the Katyn massacre took place before the adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights in 1950" and Russia did not sign the Convention on Human Rights till 1998 (Reuters, 2013). As a reaction, the Polish Foreign Minister directly heralded that *"Poles, including the Polish government, will not cease in their efforts to clarify all aspects of this heinous crime, while also striving for the full rehabilitation of the victims [...]"* (Polskie Radio, 2013). The far-reaching circumstances of the rehabilitation process of this war-crime again reveal that Communist Crimes against humanity and the inherent legacy of Communism prevailing in many Eastern and Central European States still appear to be second-rank issues that are not taken very seriously.

4.2 EU Acts of Remembrance and Historical Rehabilitation

The former paragraph has indicated that many EU politicians and cultural elites like former dissidents have brought some attention to the urgency of recognising Communist crimes in Central Europe by proposing several programs that are intended to rehabilitate, acknowledge, recognise and commemorate Communist Crimes against Humanity. In

addition, the former section has also forwarded recent cases within the last six years that show the EU actively denying Central Europe. Although the EU has obviously failed to recognise the Communist legacy for a long time and continued to appear reluctant in terms of approving further requests on the equalisation of Communist and Nazi crimes or the ultimate ban on all communist symbols, for instance, it has certainly started to implement at least some resolutions that stimulate the remembrance of victims caused by totalitarian systems including both Nazism and Communist crimes. In the remainder of this paragraph it will be analysed to what extent the EU has taken action since 2004 in order to follow the vast amount of proposals by members of the European Parliament and to bring justice to the new Central and Eastern European Member States.

The EU, specifically the European Parliament, already took its first action one year after the Eastern Enlargement in 2004 and established a 'Resolution on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe on 8 May 1945'. Accordingly, this resolution is mainly concerned with the aftermaths of WW2 and mostly refers to the remembrance of Nazi crimes. However, this resolution also includes three distinct passages which clearly refer to Communist legacies. Therefore, it is stated that *"for some nations the end of World War II meant renewed tyranny inflicted by the Stalinist Soviet Union"* and the EU must be *"aware of the magnitude of the suffering, injustice and long-term social, political and economic degradation endured by the captive nations located on the eastern side of what was to become the Iron Curtain"*. The third passage adds up to this with acknowledging *"the success of the Central and Eastern European nations in establishing the rule of law and respect for human rights following the democratic revolutions in which they overthrew the communist regimes and liberated themselves"* (EP, 2005). Obviously this resolution of 2005 does not elaborate too much on the rehabilitation of Communist legacy, yet it is certainly a starting point of acknowledging Central Europe as part of a common European heritage.

In the following years Central and Eastern MS administered their novel role in the rotating six-month term of the Council Presidency, which put them in a powerful position. The Slovenian Presidency²² organised a 'European Public Hearing on Crimes committed by Communist Regimes' at which four relevant questions were discussed: *"How to improve knowledge about totalitarian crimes?"*; *"How to promote public awareness about totalitarian crimes?"*; *"What lessons can be drawn from successful experiences?"* and *"How*

²² The Slovenian Government held the EU Council Presidency from January to June 2008.

to achieve reconciliation?". One year later, in June 2008, this public hearing was succeeded by the initiative of the 'Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism' in cooperation with the Czech government. The declaration – which was signed by many political elites, dissidents and historians like Vaclav Havel and Joachim Gauck – aims at "Europe-wide condemnation of, and education about, the crimes of Communism" (Praguedeclaration, 2008). The declaration consists of nineteen calls²³ at which the most relevant in this case are the *"recognition that many crimes committed in the name of Communism should be assessed [...] in the same way Nazi crimes were assessed by the Nuremberg Tribunal"* and the *"formulation of a common approach regarding crimes of totalitarian regimes [...] and raising a Europe-wide awareness of the Communist crimes to clearly define a common attitude towards the crimes of the Communist regimes"* while *"ensuring the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination of victims of all totalitarian regimes"* (Praguedeclaration, 2008). Those declared visions and aims certainly mark a starting point not just of awareness raising but also of political reactions. Yet, not at least the analysed quotes and citations above have shown that the declaration has not fully achieved its honourable goals yet. Farther, it is arguable whether the Commission would have had initiated such a declaration even if Central and Eastern European MS would not have used their powerful position in the Council Presidency. Nonetheless, this important declaration paved the way for what became known as the 'Prague Process' with further EP resolutions in 2009 and 2011.

As a follow-up model the EP resumed the aforementioned declaration and adopted a 'Resolution on European conscience and totalitarianism' in April 2009. This resolution builds upon former goals and further elaborates on how to strengthen the rehabilitation of Communist legacy. The resolution was signed and co-sponsored by numerous Central and Eastern European politicians like Tunne Kelam (EE), László Tőkés (HU), István Szent-Iványi (HU) and Wojciech Roszkowski (PL), which reveals the urgency amongst the peoples they are in fact representing. The most important intentions of this resolution are certainly the aim of *"keeping the memories of the past alive, because there can be no reconciliation without truth and remembrance [...]"* and that the *"appropriate preservation of historical memory, a comprehensive reassessment of European history and Europe-wide recognition of all historical aspects of modern Europe will strengthen European integration"*. In the conclusions of the resolution, the EP highlights that it is indeed *"convinced that the ultimate goal of*

²³ The complete explanation of the *Prague Declaration* can be found in Appendix 3, given below.

disclosure and assessment of the crimes committed by the Communist totalitarian regimes is reconciliation, which can be achieved by [...] fostering moral renewal.” (EP, 2009). To conclude, this resolution not just strengthened the view on Communist legacy in the EU but also called *“for the proclamation of 23 August as a Europe-wide Day of Remembrance for the victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, to be commemorated with dignity and impartiality”* and the creation of a ‘Platform of European Memory and Conscience’. The EU-wide day of remembrance on 23 August²⁴ has already been proposed in the Prague Declaration but soon lost political attention. The specific date has been selected since it coincides with the creation of the *Molotov-Ribbion Pact* in which Nazi-Germany and the Soviet Union mutually agreed upon the division of Central and Eastern Europe among themselves. One of the main goals of this day is thus *“to preserve the memory of the victims of mass deportations and exterminations, while promoting democratic values with the aim of reinforcing peace and stability in Europe”* (EP, 2009).

The indicated ‘Platform for European Memory and Conscience’ was after earlier initiatives by the Czech Council Presidency (2009) and the Hungarian Presidency (2011) finally established in December 2011 thanks to the Polish Presidency, which again shows that Central European States highly benefitted from their advantageous but limited given period of power²⁵. The platform is basically based upon and founded by several institutions of the respective MS, i.e. the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, the Hannah Arendt Centre in Bulgaria, the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen Memorial in Germany or the Institute of National Remembrance in Poland, that each aim at rehabilitating European history. In essence, the platform shall serve as an educational project that brings together EU governments and NGOs in order to activate research, documentation, awareness raising and education of crimes committed by totalitarian regimes. Thus it coordinates the study of the totalitarian past on the EU-level and frequently organises conferences like i.e. the ‘Legal Settlement of Communist Crimes’ in 2012 that aimed at analysing the achieved status quo and what ought to be improved in terms of rehabilitating totalitarian history in the future (PEMC, 2014).

²⁴ The European Parliament called the EU MS to implement the 23rd of August as a common ‘Remembrance Day for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism’ from 2015 onwards.

²⁵ Here, the author refers to the rotating Presidency of the EU Council that is limited to six months (for further reading see: EU Council, 2014)

4.3 Concluding Remarks

The analytical steps in the aforementioned paragraphs have illustrated how important it appears to be for Central European elites - like high-rank politicians and former dissidents - to become officially recognised by the EU in terms of their Communist legacy. Like Honneth (1995) and Taylor (1992) have argued, the integrity of the individual highly depends on the recognition or approval by others. If this (mutual) recognition is absent however, self-esteem cannot be developed and the individual feels stigmatised. Furthermore, the individual does not get the feeling of being equal – in this case to Europeans from other States – which has been denoted as a prerequisite for EU support by Riishoj (2007). One of Michnik's quotes is quite illustrative here as he said *"It has the feeling that the Eastern European EU countries are already being treated as second-class members."* (App.1). It is striking however, that some citations are potentially more valuable in this context than others. For instance, it is doubtless that persons like Michnik, Schöpflin and Havel who all represent Europeanists and advocates of European values are indeed struggling for recognition of crimes against humanity and European values whereas national-conservative politicians like the Polish MEPs Foltyn-Kubicka and Roszkowski rather struggle for recognition of crimes committed by the Russian enemy that has to be 'antagonised' by the Union. To put it bluntly, the reason for a perceived misrecognition appeared to be the lacking rehabilitation process of Communist legacies and the inherent crimes, i.e. mass massacres and violent defeats of peaceful revolutions.

The subsequent section dealing with the most important EP resolutions and multilateral declarations, intended to bring justice to Central Europeans, has in spite of some progress revealed that the EU is still applying double standards when assessing totalitarian regimes and its aftermaths. Tremendous events and massacres caused by Fascism like the Holocaust have been openly rehabilitated and commemorated by EU institutions and old Member States since the late 1960s already, whereas Communist crimes have been disregarded and denied for a long time. As a result, the victimised families did indeed not just suffer from the mere losses of their relatives, including children, wives, husbands, parents, grandparents, but additionally and much more from the global denial of these fatal crimes. It is possible, that especially the latter fact has caused a certain resentment of Central Europeans towards the EU and European integration in general – Hence, as assumed in the introductory part of this thesis, *misrecognition* indeed appears to be a driver of Central European Euroscepticism.

5. Conclusions and Prospects of the EU

The intention of this bachelor thesis is twofold: On the one hand it aims at raising the awareness of the manifold conception of *Euroscepticism*, which simply cannot exclusively be analysed on the basis of public opinion polls, since these merely reveal prevailing attitudes and opinions amongst the public, highly manipulable by different circumstances. On the other hand, I concentrated on the elite-level of Euroscepticism in Central Europe – a novel approach that examines the prevalence of EU opposition amongst political leaders and cultural elites like former dissidents and national intellectuals who in the end literally ‘matter’ when it comes to power politics. The aforementioned analyses have forwarded some results that serve as appropriate answers to the central question(s) of this paper. The first part of the analysis (4.1) has demonstrated that there is indeed a recognition struggle amongst the political and cultural elite²⁶ in Central Europe. Toomey (2007) was the first who found that the political elite in Poland is far more sceptical towards the EU than the Polish public. Consequently, my analysis builds upon his conclusions and goes a step further by conducting a cross-national comparison which indicates that also political elites from Hungary and Czechia are quite disappointed about the EU’s way of treating CEMS. At this point, Riishoj (2007) dealing with the interplay of Europeanization and Euroscepticism is of importance as he concentrates on the clash of national and European identities as a reason for Euroscepticism. He argues that after a period of Euro-optimism a new period of neo-realism and rational-choice emerged. People started do distinguish between the ‘We-ness’ and the ‘Otherness’ in Brussels. This is caused by different types of collective identities as each nation follows different national “myths, narratives and national symbols”. He further argues that the people have to get the feeling of being equal with each other and belonging to a community in order to accept the new situation in the EU (Riishoj, 2007, p.503). The analysis of this thesis supports this argumentation and found that distinctive national identities have to be recognised at the supranational EU-level in order to avoid harsh cleavages between ‘we’ and ‘them’. The results of this thesis can also complement former findings on Euroscepticism in Central Europe since a vast amount of scholars has exclusively focused on Euroscepticism on the mass-level and in party-systems. Several scholars like Hooghe and Marks (2007), Lubbers and Scheepers (2007) and Szczerbiak (2001) argue that

²⁶ Here, it is noteworthy that mass-level analyses including surveys and polls concerning Euroscepticism have revealed that Euroscepticism is still rather low amongst Central Europe citizens, yet they found an increasing trend of the latter. Thus, elite- and mass-level analyses indeed appear to be very contrasting notions that unfold different developments.

socio-economic fears like the potential loss of employment and the worsening of personal economic well-being generate an opposition towards the EU. Although some publications even include the political elite, scholars like Neumayer (2008) or Szczerbiak (2004) solely focus on competition between national parties and argue that many EU issues are misused as tools for the distinction of political fields and to draw lines between the parties – the result is the establishment of new anti-EU, populist and protest parties. Moreover, Hanley (2004) argues that an increasing number of parties tend to follow national-interest ideologies after EU accession due to the fear of sovereignty loss. Accordingly, this thesis complements the gap between socio-economic explanations of public Euroscepticism (Hooghe & Marks, 2007; Szczerbiak, 2001) and the emergence of Euroscepticism due to party-politics (Hanley, 2004; Neumayer, 2008) while elaborating on a different factor – the misrecognition and denial of Communist legacies – which produces eurosceptic thoughts in the long run. Besides this, the thesis has forwarded some cases of active denial (4.1.2) and thus illustrates to what extent the perceived misrecognition by the EU can be observed in real-life situations. Hence, the aforementioned indicators served as an answer to the first sub-question whether and to what extent the recognition struggle of Central Europeans is observable.

Subsequently, the second part of the analysis (4.2) has answered the second sub-question of this thesis, namely to what extent the EU has already implemented measures that intend to bring justice to the numerous demands of Central Europeans. Here, it has been demonstrated which resolutions and declarations the EU has adopted in order to stimulate an appropriate way of rehabilitating Communist legacies of Central Europe. Accordingly, the examination of both sub-questions automatically answers the central question of this research project: *To what extent has the misrecognition of Central Europe led to an increasing level of Central European Euroscepticism since the Eastern Enlargement in 2004?* On the basis of the analysis it is questionable whether the Union has successfully acknowledged Communist legacies and commemorated crucial parts of Central Europe's history. As a result, I assume that the absence of appropriate recognition has indeed led to a higher level of Central European Euroscepticism amongst the elite-level. In addition, the EU has proven to apply double standards when rehabilitating totalitarianism in Europe and has only half-heartedly implemented necessary measures that dignify victimised families of Communist crimes. However, the tackle of mistrust, anger and misrecognition would have been essential for a reliable Union, or as Vaclav Havel[†] has greatly circumscribed it in one of

his last speeches in the European Parliament in 2009: *“I have observed that in our country – and most likely in many other countries too – people talk about “us” - in my case Czechs – and “them”, “them” meaning some wicked foreigners in Brussels – as if we weren’t in Brussels too! This division into “us” as people who are by definition good, on the one hand, and some evil “them”, who want to harm us at all costs, on the other, is evidence of just one thing: scant understanding of the very principle of integration. So that too is something that needs to be tackled with patience.”* (Appendix 1).

The last section of this concluding chapter is dedicated to mention some suggestions for potential future investigations in this crucial research field. The examination of various scholarly articles, scientific books, interviews, speeches and public opinions has unfolded that there is a growing sense of opposing the EU in general. The recent Ukrainian conflict has again shed some light in EU domestic policy although it appears to be a merely external problem at first sight. Member States like Poland, for instance, have long been called for harsh sanctions against Russia and voted for a strong common voice in external affairs. However, amongst others Germany under Chancellor Merkel constantly rejected to implement harsh economic sanctions against Russia in the first place since Russia is one of Germany’s major trading partners. Does this again unfold an indicator of misrecognition and denial? Is the EU unofficially ruled by a few but economically strong Member States like Germany and France? Certainly, this would be a relevant and urgent topic for further investigations in the field of Euroscepticism. In addition, concerning the recognition struggle of Central Europe I want to refer to Loytomaki (2014) who elaborated on the question to what extent the EU has made efforts to rehabilitate its *Colonialist legacy* that ultimately affected millions of people around the globe. Why has the EU almost denied this crucial part of its own history? Only a fundamental and complete acknowledgment of its long history and diverse legacy will make the EU an authentic and reliable entity in the future.

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7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 – Selected Quotes

Hungary:

MEP György Schöpflin²⁷ (EPP²⁸):

“Without a thorough scrutiny of its past, the Left in some of the former Communist states is obliged – compels itself – to live with a false past, a past from which all sorts of painful events are screened out. This further forces the Left to protect this false past and thereby its democratic credibility is eroded. Seeing as the Western Left fully accepts this unreconstructed post-Communist Left as a legitimate partner, it too finds itself obliged to defend an indefensible past. Consequently, its own commitment to democracy is, to that extent, weakened.”

“[...] the West regards this issue as irrelevant as it gets in the way of everyday business.”

“Communist crimes are less important than Nazi ones.”

“[This approach] eats away at East-West relations.”

MEP Jozsef Szajer²⁹ (EPP):

“A democrat, a European cannot accept the fact that even today, even in this Parliament, there are people for whom the crimes of the Communist dictatorship are excusable and forgivable. A double standard distinguishing between victim and victim, crime and crime, suffering and suffering, death and death, is unacceptable.”

“Those who try to justify the crimes of Communist dictatorship argue that all those horrors were committed by those regimes in the name of noble ideals, in the name of equality and fraternity. Ladies and gentlemen, Madam President, this is an enormous lie, and all they have done is to be counted not in their favour but against them, for it was with the promise of noble aims that they deceived people, as the writer István Örkény said on Hungarian Radio at the time of the 1956 Revolution: ‘We lied by night and we lied by day, we lied on every wavelength’.”

Ex-MEP István Szent-Iványi³⁰ (Liberals):

“Europe’s conscience cannot be clear without fully examining and remembering the past. When we remember the victims, then we are truly fulfilling our obligations, because it is our common obligation and responsibility to make the 21st century different from the 20th, so that the terrors of totalitarianism may never return to Europe.”

²⁷ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28135/GYORGY_SCHOPFLIN_home.html.

²⁸ European Peoples Party of the European Parliament; centre-right; also referred to as Christian Democrats.

²⁹ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/23821/mep_home.html.

³⁰ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/23830/ISTVAN_SZENT-IVANYI_home.html.

MEP László Tőkés³¹ (EPP):

“Last week Romanian, Hungarian and Bulgarian speakers took part in the public hearing that, in connection with the Prague Declaration, placed the crimes of Communism on the agenda. The resolution subsequently adopted states the following: the European Community must abandon the double standard that is evident in the different ways in which Nazism and Communism have been judged. Both inhumane dictatorships deserve equal condemnation.

I ask the European Parliament to stand in solidarity with the victims of Fascist Communism and to help defeat the enduring legacy of Communism in accordance with the aforementioned moral, historical and political exigencies. Only in this way can a divided Europe be truly unified and become that which Prime Minister Gordon Brown spoke of yesterday, in relation to the 20th anniversary, as follows: ‘My friends, today there is no Old Europe, no New Europe, no East or West Europe, there is only one Europe, our home Europe’. So be it!”

[Sources: EP, 2009a]

³¹ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/39726/mep_home.html.

Poland:

Adam Michnik (Essayist & Public Dissident): (Interview - Spiegel, 2013)

"We are the illegitimate children, the bastards of communism. It shaped our mentality."

"Everything is still fragile in our countries, even two decades after the end of communism."

"It has the feeling that the Eastern European EU countries are already being treated as second-class members, and that open criticism would make the discrimination even worse."

"Look at Poland. There are those there who are convinced that we belong in the first class. It has to do with our messianism, with the feeling of being Christian Europe's advance guard on the frontier of the barbaric East."

"The fight against communism was a little like a war: We put on the uniform and went to the front, and after the victory many of us withdrew. We dissidents had very high moral standards. No one believed that communism would actually collapse in front of our eyes. But then it happened, and suddenly people like me, with a completely different background than most of their fellow Poles, were in power. But we hadn't learned to make policy according to the rule of a democracy. Besides, our noble aspirations were probably too much for the majority of the people."

MEP Filip Kaczmarek³² (EPP):

"The more Europeans know about the true face of totalitarianism, the better it will be for the future of the European Union. This is not a matter of celebrating the sufferings of millions of people. It is about understanding the dramatic consequences which came from and are still coming from totalitarian practices in many countries in Europe. Solidarity, freedom, empathy, toleration, dialogue – all of these values look somewhat different if we look at them from the perspective of experiences with totalitarianism. Let us remember this. Establishing an International Day of the Heroes of the Fight Against Totalitarianism would undoubtedly help raise the level of knowledge about a painful past. That in turn would contribute to a reduction in prejudice, a limiting of stereotypes and a growth of the hope that never again will we in Europe experience totalitarianism."

³² EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28280/Filip_KACZMAREK_home.html.

MEP Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka³³ (UEN; PiS³⁴):

"I would like once again to recall a man who should become a symbol of an unshakeable attitude and resistance to totalitarians – Cavalry Captain Witold Pilecki. He voluntarily entered the Auschwitz extermination camp to organise the resistance movement and gather information about mass murders. He managed to escape, only to die several years later from a bullet in the back of the head, dispatched on the orders of Soviet butchers. I therefore also appeal once again for 25 May, the date of his execution, to be designated the International Day of the Heroes of the Fight Against Totalitarianism, because many unknown people, who just like Pilecki lost their lives in the fight for fundamental rights and freedoms, deserve to be remembered."

"I should like to add one further comment. Yesterday in Parliament we celebrated the European Day of home-made ice cream. I repeat, we celebrated the European Day of home-made ice cream. I do not therefore understand why 25 May cannot be the day when we remember the heroes of the fight against totalitarianism."

MEP Wojciech Roszkowski³⁵ (Historian; UEN):

"Madam President, it is sometimes said that Nazi totalitarianism originates from the Right and Communist totalitarianism from the Left. This is not very precise. Racial hatred and class hatred are only two varieties of the same thing – hatred – which devastates the human conscience and social relations. We heard one such statement here a moment ago, the statement by Mr Pafilis."

"Whoever today relativises the criminal character of totalitarianism, be it Nazi or Communist totalitarianism, stands in opposition to the traditions of a country ruled by law and to democracy. It is, by the way, characteristic that while the European Right does not relativise Nazi crimes today, the European Left does relativise Communist crimes."

³³ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/34930/HANNA_FOLTYN-KUBICKA_home.html.

³⁴ Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN) & Polish Law and Justice Party (PiS) are both highly national-conservative and thus eurosceptic parties, respectively associations.

³⁵ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28356/WOJCIECH_ROSZKOWSKI_home.html.

MEP Ewa Tomaszewska³⁶ (UEN, PiS):

“Madam President, when I hear in this Chamber that the Communists are not prepared to hang their heads, despite the tens of millions of victims of the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Sea Canal, the millions of people deported to Siberia from many nations (including Russians, but the Poles alone have to be counted in millions), and the sentencing of entire nations to death, for example the Crimean Tartars, I am astounded and outraged.”

“Cavalry Captain Pilecki, who went into Auschwitz as a volunteer, and was later also imprisoned by the Communists, told his wife ‘Auschwitz was only a game’. My country was affected by both totalitarian systems, and the wounds are still healing today. No such system has the right to exist. We should honour those who fought against totalitarianism, and we should honour the memory of the victims.”

MEP Bogusław Sonik³⁷ (EPP):

“The establishment of an International Day of the Heroes of the Fight Against Totalitarianism would be a step in the direction of a common understanding of 20th-century European history and part of the common fight against mutual prejudice and ignorance concerning historical facts. Keeping the crimes of totalitarian regimes – Nazi and Communist – in the minds of Europeans can make us hope that our continent will never again be the scene of such tragic events.”

Ex-MEP and former EP President Prof. Jerzy Buzek³⁸ (EPP):

(Speech during ‘Legal Settlement of Communist Crimes’ conference)

“Thank you very much Madame Chair, it is a great opportunity for us members of the European Parliament to host all of you in our institution because we feel that we are in the heart of the EU and we are ready to defend democracy and human rights, so it is very important that we are ready to defend our memory and remembrance of everything what happened in our history which is very important for all of us. So this conference is interesting for all members of the European Parliament.”

MEP Zbigniew Zaleski³⁹ (EPP):

“[...] whilst the Nazi horror is fairly well known, and even some Germans have tried to take it in, paradoxically little is known about Stalinism. The paradox lies in the fact that even the Siberians, from Stalin’s own country, thought that he was a good man and that the cause of Russia’s misfortunes lay elsewhere.”

[Sources: EP, 2009a; PEMC, 2009; Spiegel, 2013]

³⁶ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/39022/EWA_TOMASZEWSKA_home.html.

³⁷ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28299/BOGUSLAW_SONIK_home.html.

³⁸ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28269/JERZY_BUZEK_home.html.

³⁹ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28300/ZBIGNIEW_ZALESKI_home.html.

Czech Republic:

Vaclav Havel (Essayist; Dissident; ex-President of Czechoslovakia):
(Speech European Parliament Nov. 11, 2009)

“However, the only way the principle of multilayer sovereignty can be accepted is if there is civic and political identification with it. I have observed that in our country – and most likely in many other countries too – people talk about “us” - in my case Czechs – and “them”, “them” meaning some wicked foreigners in Brussels – as if we weren’t in Brussels too! This division into “us” as people who are by definition good, on the one hand, and some evil “them”, who want to harm us at all costs, on the other, is evidence of just one thing: scant understanding of the very principle of integration. So that too is something that needs to be tackled with patience.”

“We are all in the same boat and that boat is steering a good course. And it will continue to do so, so long as all its passengers share the responsibility and do not play their own game and are follow their private interests. Shouting about unspecified national interests, which is simply a cover for lack of self-confidence, is not the way to acquire prestige or a unique position in an existing community. That can be achieved only by purposeful interaction with others and involvement in the common cause.”

Alexandr Vondra (Czech Diplomat; Deputy of Foreign Affairs):

“There are several reasons why there is value in commemorating such an event and in establishing a permanent communication and research project such as the platform proposed by the Czech Presidency.”

“Firstly, we owe it to those who suffered as result of totalitarian crimes not just to remember their experience at the hands of overbearing and unaccountable state regimes, but also to confront the past collectively. Only by reconciling ourselves to history can we truly break away from the bonds imposed by the regimes of the past.”

“Given the recent history of my country I have focused in particular on the tragedy of totalitarian Communist rule. But there are relatively few countries represented in this Parliament today which have not been touched by totalitarianism in one form or another over the past century. Any system which places the state above criticism and challenge, any system which places the creativity of people at the mercy of the regime, any system which diminishes the individual has no place in the sort of societies which we seek to build within the framework of the European Union.”

[Sources: EP, 2009a; Vaclavhavel, 2009]

Miscellaneous Citations:

Ex-Commissioner Ján Figel' (Slovakia):

"[...] we should create a European memory, a European fellowship, and at the same time bolster the processes which prevent the return of totalitarianism and the trivialisation and denial of its crimes, or denial of the truth. The denial of these crimes actually amounts to a relativisation not only of the truth but also of ethics and morality, leading to further and further problems and to the idea that eliminating people means eliminating the problem. The idea that problems can be eliminated by eliminating people is one of the principles of Stalinism."

MEP Tunne Kelam⁴⁰ (EPP; from Estonia):

"So the question is why, 61 years later, we still have to argue about the same problems. I think that today what we need is not only the economic and political enlargement of Europe but the enlargement of European awareness of the massive crimes against humanity which occurred everywhere in Europe in the 20th century. We need the integration of European historic perception – the integration of prejudices and different views of history – as only in this way can we proceed to the better Europe of the future."

"No, we have to deal with, not argue about, the question of dictatorships. We must start with the victims – with the equality of victims – because every victim of any totalitarian regime is to be considered equal in human dignity and deserves justice and remembrance as well as Europe-wide recognition and guarantees of 'never again'."

MEP Gisela Kallenbach⁴¹ (Group of the Greens; from Germany):

"Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, nearly 20 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain, this is the first debate in this House on an issue which could drive a wedge between people in the East and in the West, even in our European Community. Why? The view of a totalitarian regime from the outside is very different from the view from the inside. The way in which 20th century European history was dealt with and retold differed greatly, especially in the individual Member States. Moreover, in some Central and Eastern European Member States, people who disregarded human rights or sent people to camps or to their death without following the legal procedure are still in office and held in esteem. It poisons our common future if we fail to acknowledge this properly. Europe should therefore not remain inactive."

[Source: EP, 2009a]

⁴⁰ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28424/TUNNE_KELAM_home.html.

⁴¹ EP Profile: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/28236/GISELA_KALLENBACH_home.html.

7.2 Appendix 2 – EP Resolution B6-0290/2005

European Parliament resolution on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe on 8 May 1945:

The European Parliament,

– having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. commemorating the anniversary of the ending of World War II in Europe on 8 May 1945 as a consequence of the capitulation of Nazi Germany,

B. commemorating and mourning all the victims of Nazi tyranny,

C. commemorating in particular all the victims of the Holocaust,

D. commemorating and mourning the loss of all the victims of the war on all sides as a common European tragedy,

E. grateful to all those who contributed to the liberation from National Socialism, a system based on inhumanity and tyranny, symbolised by this 8 May 1945,

F. paying special tribute to all those allied forces who sacrificed their lives and to those nations, especially the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the other allied states, that fought the war against Nazism and fascism, and grateful to those nations who strongly supported the re-establishment of freedom and democracy in most of the western part of our continent,

G. remembering that for some nations the end of World War II meant renewed tyranny inflicted by the Stalinist Soviet Union,

H. aware of the magnitude of the suffering, injustice and long-term social, political and economic degradation endured by the captive nations located on the eastern side of what was to become the Iron Curtain,

I. acknowledging the success of the Central and Eastern European nations in establishing the rule of law and respect for human rights following the democratic revolutions in which they overthrew the communist regimes and liberated themselves,

J. regarding the success of the European integration process and the transatlantic alliance, and the peace and prosperity they have brought, as a forceful answer to the lessons learned from past misfortunes and failures,

1. Highlights the importance of keeping the memories of the past alive, because there cannot be reconciliation without truth and remembrance; emphasises at the same time that only a strong Europe can offer a means of overcoming the atrocities of the past;

2. Expresses respect for, and pays tribute to, all who fought against tyranny, and particularly those who became its victims;

3. Renews its commitment to a peaceful and prosperous Europe founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights;
4. Confirms its united stand against all totalitarian rule of whatever ideological persuasion;
5. Welcomes this first opportunity to commemorate the anniversary with elected Members from all 25 Member States as an expression of the ever closer union of our nations and citizens, who have overcome the divisions between aggressors and victims and between victors and the defeated, an occasion to share and combine our remembrances on the way to a truly common European memory and an opportunity to prevent recurrences of nationalism and totalitarian rule;
6. Welcomes the fact that the Central and Eastern European states and peoples can now also enjoy freedom and the right to determine their destiny after so many decades under Soviet domination or occupation or other communist dictatorships; welcomes German unification and the fact that ten of the Central and Eastern European states have joined, or will soon join, the European Union;
7. Stresses that the process of European integration has helped to overcome almost all post-war dictatorships on the European continent, both in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and in Spain, Portugal and Greece;
8. Declares that the process of European integration and the further development of the European Union as a model of peace are the result of a free decision by the people to determine their own destiny and commit themselves to a shared future;
9. Declares that, under the Helsinki Agreements, no country has the right to decide on the destiny of another country;
10. Calls on all countries to open their archives pertaining to World War II;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the parliaments of the Member States, the governments and parliaments of the accession and candidate countries, the governments and parliaments of the countries associated with the European Union, the governments and parliaments of the Members of the Council of Europe, and the United States Congress.

[Source: EP, 2005]

7.3 Appendix 3 – Prague Declaration 2008

Bearing in mind the dignified and democratic future of our European home,

- whereas societies that neglect the past have no future,
- whereas Europe will not be united unless it is able to reunite its history, recognize Communism and Nazism as a common legacy and bring about an honest and thorough debate on all the totalitarian crimes of the past century,
- whereas the Communist ideology is directly responsible for crimes against humanity,
- whereas a bad conscience stemming from the Communist past is a heavy burden for the future of Europe and for our children,
- whereas different valuations of the Communist past may still split Europe into "West" and "East",
- whereas European integration was a direct response to wars and violence provoked by totalitarian systems on the continent,
- whereas consciousness of the crimes against humanity committed by the Communist regimes throughout the continent must inform all European minds to the same extent as the Nazi regimes crimes did,
- whereas there are substantial similarities between Nazism and Communism in terms of their horrific and appalling character and their crimes against humanity,
- whereas the crimes of Communism still need to be assessed and judged from the legal, moral and political as well as the historical point of view,
- whereas the crimes were justified in the name of the class struggle theory and the principle of dictatorship of the "proletariat" using terror as a method to preserve the dictatorship,
- whereas Communist ideology has been used as a tool in the hands of empire builders in Europe and in Asia to reach their expansionist goals,
- whereas many of the perpetrators committing crimes in the name of Communism have not yet been brought to justice and their victims have not yet been compensated,
- whereas providing objective comprehensive information about the Communist totalitarian past leading to a deeper understanding and discussion is a necessary condition for sound future integration of all European nations,
- whereas the ultimate reconciliation of all European peoples is not possible without a concentrated and in depth effort to establish the truth and to restore the memory,
- whereas the Communist past of Europe must be dealt with thoroughly both in the academy and among the general public, and future generations should have ready access to information on Communism,
- whereas in different parts of the globe only a few totalitarian Communist regimes survive but, nevertheless, they control about one fifth of the world's population, and by still clinging to power they commit crimes and impose a high cost to the well-being of their people,
- whereas in many countries, even though Communist parties are not in power, they have not distanced themselves publicly from the crimes of Communist regimes nor condemned them,
- whereas Prague is one of the places that lived through the rule of both Nazism and Communism,

believing that millions of victims of Communism and their families are entitled to enjoy justice, sympathy, understanding and recognition for their sufferings in the same way as the victims of Nazism have been morally and politically recognized,

we, participants of the Prague Conference "European Conscience and Communism",

- having regard to the European Parliament resolution on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe on 8 May 1945 of May 12th, 2005,
- having regard to Resolution 1481 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of January 26th, 2006,
- having regard to the resolutions on Communist crimes adopted by a number of national parliaments,
- having regard to the experience of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa,
- having regard to the experience of Institutes of Memory and memorials in Poland, Germany, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, the United States, the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes in Romania, the museums of occupation in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia as well as the House of Terror in Hungary,
- having regard to present and upcoming presidencies in the EU and the Council of Europe
- having regard to the fact that 2009 is the 20th anniversary of the collapse of Communism in Eastern and Central Europe as well as the mass killings in Romania and the massacre in Tiananmen Square in Beijing,

Call for:

1. reaching an all-European understanding that both the Nazi and Communist totalitarian regimes each to be judged by their own terrible merits to be destructive in their policies of systematically applying extreme forms of terror, suppressing all civic and human liberties, starting aggressive wars and, as an inseparable part of their ideologies, exterminating and deporting whole nations and groups of population; and that as such they should be considered to be the main disasters, which blighted the 20th century,
2. recognition that many crimes committed in the name of Communism should be assessed as crimes against humanity serving as a warning for future generations, in the same way Nazi crimes were assessed by the Nuremberg Tribunal,
3. formulation of a common approach regarding crimes of totalitarian regimes, inter alia Communist regimes, and raising a Europe-wide awareness of the Communist crimes in order to clearly define a common attitude towards the crimes of the Communist regimes,
4. introduction of legislation that would enable courts of law to judge and sentence perpetrators of Communist crimes and to compensate victims of Communism,
5. ensuring the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination of victims of all the totalitarian regimes,
6. European and international pressure for effective condemnation of the past Communist crimes and for efficient fight against ongoing Communist crimes,
7. recognition of Communism as an integral and horrific part of Europe's common history
8. acceptance of pan-European responsibility for crimes committed by Communism,

9. establishment of 23rd August, the day of signing of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, as a day of remembrance of the victims of both Nazi and Communist totalitarian regimes, in the same way Europe remembers the victims of the Holocaust on January 27th,
10. responsible attitudes of National Parliaments as regards acknowledgement of Communist crimes as crimes against humanity, leading to the appropriate legislation, and to the parliamentary monitoring of such legislation,
11. effective public debate about the commercial and political misuse of Communist symbols,
12. continuation of the European Commission hearings regarding victims of totalitarian regimes, with a view to the compilation of a Commission communication,
13. establishment in European states, which had been ruled by totalitarian Communist regimes, of committees composed of independent experts with the task of collecting and assessing information on violations of human rights under totalitarian Communist regime at national level with a view to collaborating closely with a Council of Europe committee of experts;
14. ensuring a clear international legal framework regarding a free and unrestricted access to the Archives containing the information on the crimes of Communism,
15. establishment of an Institute of European Memory and Conscience which would be both - A) a European research institute for totalitarianism studies, developing scientific and educational projects and providing support to networking of national research institutes specialising in the subject of totalitarian experience, B) and a pan-European museum/memorial of victims of all totalitarian regimes, with an aim to memorialise victims of these regimes and raise awareness of the crimes committed by them,
16. organising of an international conference on the crimes committed by totalitarian Communist regimes with the participation of representatives of governments, parliamentarians, academics, experts and NGOs, with the results to be largely publicised world-wide,
17. adjustment and overhaul of European history textbooks so that children could learn and be warned about Communism and its crimes in the same way as they have been taught to assess the Nazi crimes
18. the all-European extensive and thorough debate of Communist history and legacy,
19. joint commemoration of next year's 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the massacre in Tiananmen Square and the killings in Romania.

We, participants of the Prague Conference "European Conscience and Communism", address all peoples of Europe, all European political institutions including national governments, parliaments, European Parliament, European Commission, Council of Europe and other relevant international bodies, and call on them to embrace the ideas and appeals stipulated in this Prague Declaration and to implement them in practical steps and policies.

[Source: [Praguedeclaration](#), 2008]

7.4 Appendix 4 – EP Resolution B6-0165/2009

European Parliament resolution of 2 April 2009 on European conscience and totalitarianism:

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 260(III) A of 9 December 1948 on genocide,
 - having regard to Articles 6 and 7 of the Treaty on European Union,
 - having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
 - having regard to Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law,
 - having regard to Resolution 1481 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of 25 January 2006 on the need for international condemnation of the crimes of totalitarian Communist regimes,
 - having regard to its declaration of 23 September 2008 on the proclamation of 23 August as European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism ,
 - having regard to its many previous resolutions on democracy and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, including that of 12 May 2005 on the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe on 8 May 1945, that of 23 October 2008 on the commemoration of the Holodomor, and that of 15 January 2009 on Srebrenica,
 - having regard to the Truth and Justice Commissions established in various parts of the world, which have helped those who have lived under numerous former authoritarian and totalitarian regimes to overcome their differences and achieve reconciliation,
 - having regard to the statements made by its President and the political groups on 4 July 2006, 70 years after General Franco's coup d'état in Spain,
 - having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas historians agree that fully objective interpretations of historical facts are not possible and objective historical narratives do not exist; whereas, nevertheless, professional historians use scientific tools to study the past, and try to be as impartial as possible,
- B. whereas no political body or political party has a monopoly on interpreting history, and such bodies and parties cannot claim to be objective,

C. whereas official political interpretations of historical facts should not be imposed by means of majority decisions of parliaments; whereas a parliament cannot legislate on the past,

D. whereas a core objective of the European integration process is to ensure respect for fundamental rights and the rule of law in the future, and whereas appropriate mechanisms for achieving this goal have been provided for in Articles 6 and 7 of the Treaty on European Union,

E. whereas misinterpretations of history can fuel exclusivist policies and thereby incite hatred and racism,

F. whereas the memories of Europe's tragic past must be kept alive in order to honour the victims, condemn the perpetrators and lay the foundations for reconciliation based on truth and remembrance,

G. whereas millions of victims were deported, imprisoned, tortured and murdered by totalitarian and authoritarian regimes during the 20th century in Europe; whereas the uniqueness of the Holocaust must nevertheless be acknowledged,

H. whereas the dominant historical experience of Western Europe was Nazism, and whereas Central and Eastern European countries have experienced both Communism and Nazism; whereas understanding has to be promoted in relation to the double legacy of dictatorship borne by these countries,

I. whereas from the outset European integration has been a response to the suffering inflicted by two world wars and the Nazi tyranny that led to the Holocaust and to the expansion of totalitarian and undemocratic Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as a way of overcoming deep divisions and hostility in Europe through cooperation and integration and of ending war and securing democracy in Europe,

J. whereas the process of European integration has been successful and has now led to a European Union that encompasses the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which lived under Communist regimes from the end of World War II until the early 1990s, and whereas the earlier accessions of Greece, Spain and Portugal, which suffered under long-lasting fascist regimes, helped secure democracy in the south of Europe,

K. whereas Europe will not be united unless it is able to form a common view of its history, recognises Nazism, Stalinism and fascist and Communist regimes as a common legacy and brings about an honest and thorough debate on their crimes in the past century,

L. whereas in 2009 a reunited Europe will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the collapse of the Communist dictatorships in Central and Eastern Europe and the fall of the Berlin Wall, which should provide both an opportunity to enhance awareness of the past and recognise the role of democratic citizens' initiatives, and an incentive to strengthen feelings of togetherness and cohesion,

M. whereas it is also important to remember those who actively opposed totalitarian rule and who should take their place in the consciousness of Europeans as the heroes of the totalitarian age because of their dedication, faithfulness to ideals, honour and courage,

N. whereas from the perspective of the victims it is immaterial which regime deprived them of their liberty or tortured or murdered them for whatever reason,

1. Expresses respect for all victims of totalitarian and undemocratic regimes in Europe and pays tribute to those who fought against tyranny and oppression;

2. Renews its commitment to a peaceful and prosperous Europe founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights;

3. Underlines the importance of keeping the memories of the past alive, because there can be no reconciliation without truth and remembrance; reconfirms its united stand against all totalitarian rule from whatever ideological background;

4. Recalls that the most recent crimes against humanity and acts of genocide in Europe were still taking place in July 1995 and that constant vigilance is needed to fight undemocratic, xenophobic, authoritarian and totalitarian ideas and tendencies;

5. Underlines that, in order to strengthen European awareness of crimes committed by totalitarian and undemocratic regimes, documentation of, and accounts testifying to, Europe's troubled past must be supported, as there can be no reconciliation without remembrance;

6. Regrets that, 20 years after the collapse of the Communist dictatorships in Central and Eastern Europe, access to documents that are of personal relevance or needed for scientific research is still unduly restricted in some Member States; calls for a genuine effort in all Member States towards opening up archives, including those of the former internal security services, secret police and intelligence agencies, although steps must be taken to ensure that this process is not abused for political purposes;

7. Condemns strongly and unequivocally all crimes against humanity and the massive human rights violations committed by all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes; extends to the victims of these crimes and their family members its sympathy, understanding and recognition of their suffering;

8. Declares that European integration as a model of peace and reconciliation represents a free choice by the peoples of Europe to commit to a shared future, and that the European Union has a particular responsibility to promote and safeguard democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, both inside and outside the European Union;

9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to make further efforts to strengthen the teaching of European history and to underline the historic achievement of European integration and the stark contrast between the tragic past and the peaceful and democratic social order in today's European Union;

10. Believes that appropriate preservation of historical memory, a comprehensive reassessment of European history and Europe-wide recognition of all historical aspects of modern Europe will strengthen European integration;

11. Calls in this connection on the Council and the Commission to support and defend the activities of non-governmental organisations, such as Memorial in the Russian Federation, that are actively engaged in researching and collecting documents related to the crimes committed during the Stalinist period;
12. Reiterates its consistent support for strengthened international justice;
13. Calls for the establishment of a Platform of European Memory and Conscience to provide support for networking and cooperation among national research institutes specialising in the subject of totalitarian history, and for the creation of a pan-European documentation centre/memorial for the victims of all totalitarian regimes;
14. Calls for a strengthening of the existing relevant financial instruments with a view to providing support for professional historical research on the issues outlined above;
15. Calls for the proclamation of 23 August as a Europe-wide Day of Remembrance for the victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, to be commemorated with dignity and impartiality;
16. Is convinced that the ultimate goal of disclosure and assessment of the crimes committed by the Communist totalitarian regimes is reconciliation, which can be achieved by admitting responsibility, asking for forgiveness and fostering moral renewal;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the parliaments of the Member States, the governments and parliaments of the candidate countries, the governments and parliaments of the countries associated with the European Union, and the governments and parliaments of the Members of the Council of Europe.

[Source: EP, 2009]

- - - End of the Thesis - - -