Economic meltdown in Europe, an increase in immigration, and pervasive cynicism about the role of the EU are factors that allow non-mainstream parties such as the populist radical right (PRR) to benefit electorally and, thus, have the opportunity to influence decision-making in the European Parliament (EP).

My research will focus on the success and behaviour of PRR parties in the EP (i.e. what they aim to achieve in the Parliament; how well they work together; and how adept they are at using parliamentary processes to achieve their goals) in order to better understand both the Parliament and its parties.

PRR behaviour is not wholly anarchic as the parties have to abide by the strict rules and procedures of the EP. However, relationships between this motley crew of ultra-nationalist parties have been characterised by bickering and squabbling, and their influence has been further limited by parliamentary processes that restrict their participation.

Despite this, the PRR has remained a significant feature of EP life and it seems that, while these parties know what they want, they don’t know how to get it. In a nutshell, this is anarchy contained by the order of the EP.