

# Conservative CATHOLIC INFLUENCE IN EUROPE

## AN INVESTIGATIVE FACT SHEET

### Anna Záborská, MD, MEP

**Born:** June 7, 1948  
Zurich, Switzerland

#### Family:

Dr. Anton Neuwirth, *father*

- Former Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the Vatican
- Responsible for the Treaty of Slovak Republic and Holy See (1994-1998)
- Prominent member of Christian Democratic Party (KDH), and a member of the former Czechoslovak Parliament
- Ran unsuccessfully in 1993 as the KDH's presidential candidate
- Imprisoned for 12 years under Czechoslovakia's communist regime
- Current member, European Senior Citizens' Union, which has ties to EPP (European People's Party-European Democrats)

#### Professional Education:

1972: Doctorate in Medicine  
Medical Faculty of the  
Comenius University, Martin,  
Slovakia

1978: Post-graduate diploma  
Otorhinolaryngology (ear, nose  
and throat); specialization in  
ORL for children

### ANNA ZÁBORSKÁ, MD, MEP

In July 2004, Dr. Záborská was elected chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality.

Among its responsibilities, the Committee is charged with the promotion and protection of women's rights in the EU; the promotion of women's rights in developing countries; and the follow-up and implementation of international agreements involving women's rights such as the Cairo Programme of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action.

A senior member of Slovakia's Christian Democrats (KDH) and a member of the Slovak Parliament (NR SR), Dr. Záborská has publicly identified herself as a conservative. She is firmly opposed to both abortion and equal rights for homosexuals. She is a prominent member of the Forum of Life, an association of Slovak antichoice NGOs, organizations and individuals.

Dr. Záborská is also on record as stating that she intends to pursue her conservative agenda within the European Union.

### Statements Made by Anna Záborská

#### Promoting Conservative Politics at the European Parliament

*From The Slovak Spectator, May 17, 2004.  
[www.slovakspectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=16824](http://www.slovakspectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=16824),  
accessed 28 September 2004:*

“The Yes to Family programme the Christian Democratic Movement presented three years ago in Slovakia is just as topical in the European context. Every decision, every directive, has an impact on the family. I will be viewing all documents through this prism. How will they influence families in Slovakia? is the main question I'll be asking.”

“A majority of women on the committee [on Women's Rights and Gender Equality] are leftist and liberal and I think it is necessary that a conservative voice be heard. That's why there should be a conservative woman from Slovakia in the EP.”

**Political Experience:**

1990-present:

Member, Christian Democratic Movement (Kresťansko-demokratické hnutie - KDH) ([http://www.kdh.sk/index\\_eng.htm](http://www.kdh.sk/index_eng.htm))

1998-present:

Member of Slovak Parliament (NR SR)

2004-2009 (elected 14 June 2004):  
Member, European Parliament (MEP EU)

Member, European People's Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED) (*see below*)

1998-2002:

- Vice Chair, Slovak Republic (SR) Committee for Healthcare
- Member, EU-SR Joint Parliamentary Committee permanent delegation
- Member, Slovak Parliament into Inter-parliamentary Union permanent delegation
- Chair, Slovak-French Group of Friendship, a group dedicated to promoting Slovak-French relations and cooperation both on a bilateral basis and within the European Union and NATO structures
- Chair, Slovak-Benelux Group of Friendship

**Political Milestones:**

2002-present:

- Chair, SR Committee for Healthcare
- Member, Slovak Parliament – Inter-parliamentary Union permanent delegation
- Observer, European Parliament
- Member, Committee for European Integration
- Chair, Slovak-French Group of Friendship

**Statements Made by Anna Záborská**

**Promoting Conservative Politics at the European Parliament (cont.)**

*From The Slovak Spectator, May 17, 2004.*

*[www.slovak spectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=16824](http://www.slovak spectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=16824), accessed 28 September 2004:*

“There are attempts in the EP to put all forms of partnerships on equal footing with the family. The danger is that the EP adapts different resolutions without a sufficient quorum. There may be a majority of liberal voices at the present. But the acceding countries, especially those who share a deeper respect for values, such as Slovakia, Poland, Slovenia, and Lithuania, are not afraid to stand up and say [what they think].”

“Even in the EP’s conservative faction there is a liberal atmosphere and it seems as though there is some self-censure in place. It’s as though people in Europe don’t have the courage to defend conservative values.”

“My party has been criticized throughout the last 14 years for openly defending conservative values. That fire has hardened us. We have the predisposition to speak up. Many times, it’s enough to speak up and then others join.”

**Committee Members’ Opposition to Záborská’s Election**

UK Socialist Mary Honeyball condemned the appointment as “wholly inappropriate.” “Her views on abortion and homosexuality in particular could put her in direct conflict with what the committee is trying to achieve.”

German Socialist Lissy Gröner agreed, “I opposed her candidacy because her attitude is against the spirit of the committee.”

*-[http://www.moznostvolby.sk/eng\\_mon\\_zaborska.htm](http://www.moznostvolby.sk/eng_mon_zaborska.htm), accessed 30 September 2004.*

**Statements Made by Anna Záborská**

**Abortion**

“Freedom of choice is a personal matter. We can’t keep anyone from going where they want. Legislation is a different thing, however. If we have the opportunity to create legislation [in Slovakia] according to our beliefs, we should take advantage of it.”

*-The Slovak Spectator, 17 May 2004.  
[www.slovak spectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=16824](http://www.slovak spectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=16824), accessed 28 September 2004.*

“We know very well that it is not just about her body but that she is also making a decision about another life.”

*-The Slovak Spectator, 21 March 2004.  
[www.slovak spectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=12509](http://www.slovak spectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=12509), accessed 28 September 2004.*

## Political Milestones:

2004-present:

- Substitute, European Parliament Committee on Development

July 26, 2004-present:

- Chair, European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
- Member, European Parliament Conference of Committee Chairmen

### The European People's Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED)

A coalition of Christian Democrat, Conservative and other center and center-right political forces.

Pledged to resisting the political priorities of the left, it has positioned itself to set the EU's political agenda and to win its most critical votes; a goal that is currently being met with significant success ([www.eppe.org](http://www.eppe.org)).

EPP members were most active in opposing EU reports on reproductive health.

*-Preserving Power and Privilege: The Vatican's Agenda in the European Union*, Washington, DC: CFFC, 2003. [www.catholicsforchoice.org/pdf/Europea\\_n\\_Report\\_0903.pdf](http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/pdf/Europea_n_Report_0903.pdf), accessed September 28, 2004.

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Prepared by Catholics for a Free Choice  
October 2004

## Statements Made by Anna Záborská

### Abortion (cont.)

*From an interview with Magazine Markiza, May 2003:*

*Do you agree with an abortion ban even in cases of rape, if the woman was raped by her own father or brother?*

Such cases are very rare; abortions that result from rape are only about 1% of the total amount.... The woman getting pregnant after an act of violence endured a trauma. Undergoing abortion, she is exposed to another one – she ends her child's life.... The jolt from killing her own child is often bigger than the one suffered by rape.

*In which case would you agree with abortion?*

I accept the killing of unborn children only for therapeutic purposes.

*-http://casopis.markiza.sk/archiv.php?c\_id=2000, accessed 28 September 2004 (original in Slovak).*

### European Parliament Election Platform (2004)

Dr. Záborská's election platform emphasized a strong antichoice message and the preservation of traditional Christian values as the basis of a united Europe.

*-www.kdh.sk/kandidati.html (original in Slovak), accessed 30 September 2004.*

## Statements Made by Anna Záborská

### Homosexuality

“AIDS is God's vengeance for homosexuality.”

*-The Slovak Spectator, 26 July 2004 (original in Slovak).*

“I don't want to discriminate against anyone, but with these people [homosexuals] there is the potential chance that their outlook on life in basic family matters, on male and female relations, could influence children.”

*-The Slovak Spectator, 31 March 2004. [www.slovakspectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=12343](http://www.slovakspectator.sk/clanok.asp?vyd=online&cl=12343), accessed 29 September 2004.*

“With regard to my comments in the Slovakian media...I was questioning myself if these people [homosexuals] should be teachers of my kids.”

*-EUPolitix, 29 July 2004. [www.eupolitix.com/EN/News/200407/3531325a-c03d-46ca-bff6-b35b502fc5af.htm](http://www.eupolitix.com/EN/News/200407/3531325a-c03d-46ca-bff6-b35b502fc5af.htm), accessed 29 September 2004.*

“We want to protect the traditional family based on the marriage of one man and one woman. We voted on this basis in the National Parliament but we want to proceed in the same way together with our partners in Europe, in the European Parliament.”

*-SITA (SlovakPressagency), 7 June 2004.*