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Euro-Scepticism as Party Strategy: Persistence and Change in Party-Based Opposition to European Integration

*Parteien, die eine grundsätzlich oder bedingt ablehnende Haltung der europäischen Integration gegenüber vertreten, sind im gesamten politischen Spektrum zu finden. Ein kursorischer Blick auf die europäische Parteienlandschaft zeigt, dass Mitte-Links- und Mitte-Rechts-Parteien eher nicht zur Übernahme einer grundsätzlich euro-skeptischen Position tendieren, obwohl sie bestimmte Aspekte der europäischen Integration ablehnen mögen, wenn diese programmatischen Zielen zuwiderlaufen. Bis auf einige bedeutende Ausnahmen beschränkt sich die prinzipielle Ablehnung auf Parteien an den Rändern des politischen Spektrums bzw. auf Parteien, die spezifische Interessen und Identitäten repräsentieren. Basierend auf der Annahme, dass die Entscheidung einer Partei für die Annahme einer europa-skeptischen Haltung bzw. deren Modifikation eine strategische ist, untersucht der Beitrag die Wurzeln für den Euroskeptizismus der Partien und die Dynamiken seiner Unveränderlichkeit bzw. seines Wandels. Die Parteistrategie ist untrennbar mit der Position der Partei im jeweiligen Parteiensystem verbunden und wird von der Abwägung der folgenden vier, das Wesen einer politischen Partei bestimmende Ziele bestimmt: dem organisatorischen Überleben, der Umsetzung spezifischer programmatischer Ziele (*policies*), der Stimmenmaximierung (*votes*) und der Ausübung von Regierungsgewalt (*office*). Obwohl viele, wenn nicht sogar fast alle Parteien Strategien der sog.* Catch-all-*Parteien oder Kartellparteien verfolgen, hat doch eine beachtliche Anzahl an Parteien alternative oder gemischte Strategien gewählt. Die euro-skeptischen Tendenzen der Parteien und die Anreize für eine solche ablehnende Haltung werden mit diesen unterschiedlichen Strategien in Zusammenhang gebracht und analysiert. Folgenden Fragen wird nachgegangen: Warum übernehmen Parteien euroskeptische Positionen und warum verändern sie diese? Die „Zähmung der Widerspenstigen" oder die Abschwächung des Euroskeptizismus kann über Veränderungen in der Gewichtung der vier Ziele oder den Rahmenbedingungen erfolgen oder über eine Kombination aus beiden.*

1. Introduction

Parties across the political spectrum in both West and East Central Europe have adopted stances opposed to or critical of their country's participation in European integration. Most party systems have, at one point or another, featured at least one such party. The sheer diversity of Euro-scepticism in terms of contents, intensity and location in the party systems suggests that it might not be particularly useful to approach it as a single phenomenon. Although the question of whether to join the European Economic Community/European Union (hereafter EU) might be seen as dichotomous, opposition to participation in European integration ranges from absolute rejection to scepticism about particular initiatives. Euro-scepticism entails opposition to something specific, but there is considerable variety in the bases for this opposition. This diversity suggests that Euroscepticism is not a single issue, let alone a cleavage, and this is reinforced by its occurrence across several policy dimensions (Taggart/Szczerbiak 2001; Sitter 2001). Perhaps the most useful distinction, particularly with respect to the dynamics of change, is between opposition to European integration in principle and more

contingent opposition linked to specific interests. Szczerbiak/Taggart's (2000) 'hard' and 'soft' labels are now widely used to capture this distinction. Although even this still allows for 'shades of blue' (Batory 2002), it provides a rough classification and aids identification of changes in parties' Euro-scepticism. In these terms, the 'taming of the shrew' is a matter of softening Euro-scepticism, as parties shift from principled to contingent opposition or its intensity is reduced. A small number of parties have even abandoned Euro-scepticism altogether. In what follows, these dynamics are explored in terms of party strategy.

Euro-scepticism may be thought of as an 'empty box', into which a broad range of policy positions can be put. Yet the box is not completely empty, and it does not exist in a vacuum. First, Euro-scepticism is elaborated as opposition to a specific project. When EU policy is opposed on the grounds that there is too much or too little regulation/redistribution/intervention in any given area, the policy content of Euro-scepticism is cast in opposition to existing (or proposed) policy. Second, most Euro-scepticism is expressed in terms of policy not only at the EU level but also at the national level. Opposition is usually linked to a preferable domestic alternative. Each EU policy has a range of domestic policy 'alleles' (to borrow a term from biology, which denotes possible alternatives to a specific gene), one of which Euro-sceptic parties subscribe to for any given policy debate. A degree of consistency across these 'policy alleles' within a party is usually sought, and Euro-scepticism is therefore shaped by a party's position on related policies. Third, party platforms are usually designed with reference to the party's domestic competitors, and incentives to contest European integration therefore depend on other competitors' strategies. The only common basis that most Euro-sceptic parties share is nationalism, at least in the sense defined by Gellner (1983): a political doctrine that holds that the world is divided into nations and that national and political units should be congruent. However, like Euro-scepticism, nationalism says little about policy (Schopflin 1995). In short, although Euro-scepticism can accommodate a wide range of policies, party-based Euro-scepticism is shaped by the party system. If the question concerns the 'taming of the shrew', the starting point is that there is no single united 'shrew' but many 'shrews' of very different characters. And any 'taming of the shrew' is part of the national party system dynamic.

The central question concerns the conditions under which parties come to oppose participation in European integration and how this opposition is softened (or hardened). Approaching this from a (rational) actor's perspective, the elaboration and modification of stances on European integration is considered a matter of party strategy. If (drawing on Sartori 1976; Strøm 1990a; Pennings 1998) parties are defined as organisations that seek to propel candidates to elected office in pursuit of certain policy aims, then the party leadership faces four goals which often entail some kind of trade-off: i) the survival of the party; ii) the pursuit of its preferred policy outcomes; iii) the pursuit of votes; and iv) the quest for executive office. The first section, below, outlines three broad strategies that constitute responses to these challenges. The first one is associated with the catch-all model of political parties, while the other two are alternatives. The subsequent four sections each address one of the four goals, relating these to incentives for Euro-scepticism. The empirical evidence is drawn predominantly from secondary sources, published country-specific analyses, with a view to capturing the key cases and full variation in the EU member, quasi-member and prospective member states.

2. Party Strategy – Three Patterns of Opposition in Europe

Although broad trends in party organisation, electoral competition and policy have been observed in Europe over time, this should not obscure the fact that distinct types of party strategy persist. The extent to which parties adapt and change depends on their organisation and preferences, and on how they interpret challenges, almost as much as on the actual chal-

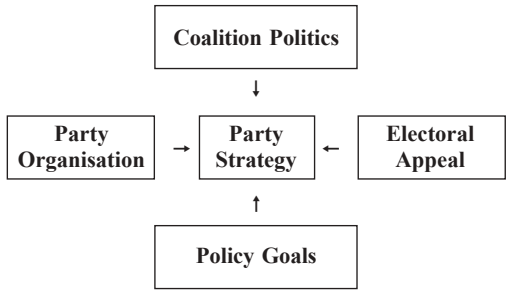
lenges. Some are more immune to contagion from their competitors than others. Whereas most of the large centre-right and -left parties have faced strong incentives to adapt to their competitors' organisational and strategic changes, whether in the form of contagion from the left in the shape of successful social democrat parties (Duverger 1954) or the catch-all parties on the centre-right (Kirchheimer 1966; Epstein 1967), others have proven more resistant. Katz/Mair (1995, 2002) find that many catch-all parties are becoming more modern 'cartel' parties, but point out that these parties face challenges by for example protest parties (Wolinetz 2002). Across Western Europe many parties have found the catch-all model difficult to imitate, or rejected this model. This applies to communists (Bosco 2000) and greens (Richardson/Rootes 1995) on the left, agrarian (Arter 2001) and denominational parties (Hanley 1994) in the centre, and new populist parties on the right (Taggart 1995). Comparable strategies have been attempted, with varying degrees of success, in post-communist East Central Europe (Sitter 2002a). These alternatives are a matter of strategy rather than party organisation. Even if, over time, most parties may employ more full time professional party officials, rely more on public funding and less on activist mass memberships, or use the media and pollsters more extensively, it does not necessarily follow that they abandon their strategies of interest representation or protest. In other words, even if party organisations and tactics converge, strategies for competition remain different if some parties decide not to attempt to catch all of the electorate.

2.1. Party Goals and Party Strategy

The strategic decision whether to maximise votes by appealing to the entire electorate (the catch-all strategy), to seek to represent the interests of a specific part of the electorate (interest representation), or capture general protest against the mainstream consensus (protest), is the product of parties' preferences in terms of their goals – survival, policy, votes, office. Pursuit of office, and therefore votes, is defined as the aim of political parties in classic rational choice analyses (Downs 1957; Riker 1962; Axelrod 1970). This has been supplemented by focus on parties' pursuit of policy, which shapes both their coalition games and their pursuit of votes (de Swaan 1973; Budge/Laver 1986; Dunleavy 1991). Moreover, policy goals may be achieved without formal participation in coalitions and formal participation may actually entail costs in terms of association with unpopular policies (Laver/Schofield 1990; Strøm 1990b; Laver/Shepsle 1996). The pursuit of votes, policy and office are thus linked, but maximising one may require merely sacrificing one of the others (Müller/Strøm 1999). To complicate this relationship further, a fourth goal – survival of the party – may be inferred by drawing on the literature on party organisation (Panebianco 1988). The party leadership is constrained by the rest of the party, the activists in particular, and the need to maintain a minimum degree of consistency with respect to the party's identity and core values. In the light of the divisive impact the EU question has had on many Scandinavian and British parties, this last point is far from trivial (Saglie 2000; Baker 2003). This is linked to the party's raison d'être, its core identity and principles, particularly in the case of parties that have their roots in protest against or opposition to other parties (Mathieu 1999). These fours goals are set out in figure 1.

Party strategy is therefore defined as the party's overall, more or less coherent, approach to these four goals. Taking a leaf out of the disci-

Figure 1: ***Party goals and strategy***



plines of military and business studies, strategy may be defined as the link between goals and their achievement (Von Clausewitz 1832) or, paraphrasing Porter (1980/1998, xxiv), as a broad formula for how a party is going to compete – a combination of what its ends should be and by which means these should be pursued. Each goal is potentially contentious. First, securing support from and maintaining the unity of the party organisation involves questions about the party's identity, ideology, internal organisation and links to external organisations. A party may remain committed to its original goals, or outgrow them over time as they are achieved or lose salience. It may accord considerable weight to ideology – a given framework for analysing issues – or downplay it, or even move toward ideological pluralism. Internal organisation, particularly organised factions, affects the leadership's freedom of action. The same holds for links with external organisations, from interest groups and trade unions to churches or grassroots movements. Second, policy pursuit and interest representation entails not only balancing and prioritising different and sometimes conflicting policy goals, but also aligning new policy positions with existing platforms. Third, electoral appeal often involves a trade-off between broad catch-all appeal and appeal to a core constituency, or between centripetal competition centred on the median voter and centrifugal campaigns that strengthen a party's profile. Fourth, coalition games by definition involve compromise with competitors. Drawing on the West European experience, three broad sets of party strategies are identified. The first is linked to the catch-all and cartel models of party organisation, while the second and third represent alternative strategies for competition.

2.2. Party Strategy and Patterns of Opposition

Although some of the attributes of the cartel and catch-all party ideal types can be found in most parties, these models are linked to a particular, dominant, form of party. In Kirchheimer's and Katz's/Mair's analyses the dynamic process that leads toward the catch-all and cartel model is one in which the major parties respond to and imitate each other's successful innovations. The old, candidate-driven elite parties were challenged by well-organised socialist mass parties that drew on trade unions, mass membership and class-oriented ideology. The response involved not only contagion in terms of organisation and campaigns, but also an effort to defeat the class appeal by invoking a wider catch-all appeal targeting the entire electorate. Coupled with increasingly independent party elites, the role of the media and focus on salient issues rather than divisive ideologies, the result is the catch-all ideal type. This entails a shift toward more professionalised parties, more independent of external organisations, which focus on competence and managerial skills as much as issues, and employ public relations-style campaigns. It is associated with a shift in the party's income, from membership dues to state subsidies and a wider range of contributions. Whereas the mass party represents society to the state, the catch-all party is a link between the two; the cartel party comes closer to representing the state to society. The catch-all strategy thus entails maximising votes and prioritising the pursuit of office, while playing down ideology and policy commitments and to some extent marginalising party activists in favour of professionals. This process of organisational and strategic adaptation is driven by the main parties' competition with each other, and shapes the left vs. right (or at least the central) dimension in a party system. This is the first and main pattern of opposition: left vs. right. In most of Western Europe, social democrats came to define the 'left', while conservatives and liberals struggled (sometimes inconclusively) to constitute the 'right'. A similar process has occurred in East Central Europe after 1989, but yielded outcomes that sometimes make the use of 'left' and 'right' in the conventional West European sense somewhat problematic.

However, a number of parties eschewed the catch-all strategy in favour of retaining focus on a section of the electorate, often reflecting cleavages other than the 'owner vs. workers'

division, notably what Lipset/Rokkan (1967) cast as state vs. church, centre vs. periphery and rural vs. urban interests. Parties face a fundamental choice whether they seek to shape the main dimension of the party system and compete primarily along this left vs. right dimension, or to circumvent it. Several parties have chosen the latter, mobilising voters along cross-cutting cleavages or policy dimensions. Western Europe features several parties that represent specific ethnic or cultural minorities, economic interests and/or champion regional autonomy, captured in the term 'territorial politics' (Rokkan/Urwin 1983). Although these parties have chosen to compete across the left vs. right dimension, they have perforce staked out positions along this dimension. Electoral competition and coalition games make such alignment obligatory, and most agrarian, religious and regional parties have aligned themselves between the social democrat left and liberal/conservative right. The second pattern of opposition is therefore competition across the left vs. right axis, focussing on the interests of a specific constituency. In most of these parties the organisation tends to retain stronger power over the leadership than in the catch-all model, because they are organised around a stricter set of interests or identities. Ideology, or commitment to the party's original aim, is likely to be important. Consequently, other things being equal, policy goals are likely to outweigh vote-maximisation or the quest for office.

A third set is made up of parties that attempt to circumvent left vs. right competition by competing on the flanks of the party system or in protest against its core consensus. The communist and fascist anti-systems parties that emerged across Europe in the wake of the First World War made up the extreme anti-system variety. Their counterparts after the Second World War may in some cases have toned down the anti-system stance, but were largely eschewed by the mainstream parties. In the 1970s some were crowded out by new populist parties in the shape of anti-tax protest parties on the right and new socialist, radical and green parties on the left. This constitutes the third pattern of opposition, at the flanks of the system. If anything, these parties often take the cartel party's organisational features to the extreme as far as leadership dominance, populist appeal and innovative campaigning is concerned, although some new left parties feature flatter organisation and stronger ideology than their mainstream social democrat rivals. They have tended to be excluded from coalition games, although this may be changing. Far right parties have participated in government in Italy, Austria and the Netherlands, and support minority centre-right coalitions in Denmark and Norway.

Finally, a number of parties have adopted mixed strategies. Several new populist parties have made concerted efforts to establish themselves as more mainstream parties (Harmel/Svasand 1997). *Forza Italia*, which was launched in the run-up to the 1994 election, epitomises the transformation from new populist party to mainstream centre-right party (Donovan 1994). Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia achieved something similar, defining one pole of the government vs. opposition dimension in Slovakia (Sitter 2002b). Others have moved partially toward catch-all strategies, as when the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish agrarian parties changed names to Centre parties between 1957 and 1965, broadening their original agrarian focus to rural or regional interests (Arter 1999, 2001).

2.3. Party Strategy and Euro-Scepticism

For most political parties Euro-scepticism – the elaboration of a platform opposed to participation in (aspects of) European integration – has been a deliberate and explicitly considered choice (see country cases in Taggart/Szczerbiak, forthcoming). This may be considered a question of party strategy, and as such linked to the three types of strategy above. Extrapolating from Euro-scepticism in Scandinavia (Sitter 2001): The catch-all strategy is hardly compatible with hard Euro-scepticism, partly because hard opposition to the EU is associated with strong ideological commitment and partly because the integration process has been a gov-

Figure 2: ***Parties and strategy***

	Protest: Competing at the flanks	Catch-all: Defining left vs. right	Interests: Cross-cutting left vs. right
– 1880		**Elite party**	
1880 –		**Mass party**	
1919 –	**Anti-system party**		**Interest party**
1945 –		**Catch-all party**	
1970 –	**Protest and new populist parties**	**Cartel party**	**Single issue party**

ernment-driven process. However, parties that find themselves considerably to the left or right of the European consensus may face greater incentives to adopt Euro-sceptic stances. This has been linked to the development of EU economic policy (Marks/Wilson 2000), but is also associated with being out of office. By contrast, the interest-oriented and protest strategies lend themselves more easily to alignment against European integration, inasmuch as protest at the domestic and EU level can be mutually reinforcing (Taggart 1998), and specific interest such as protection of agriculture is not always compatible with participation in European integration (Batory/Sitter forthcoming).

Inasmuch as European parties operate in a multi-level party system (Deschouwer 2000), they are under pressure to adapt to changing institutional parameters and policies at both domestic and EU level. The two long term goals – related to party organisation and policy preferences – are more likely to be affected by substantial developments such as discrepancies between ideology or policy at the two levels than by institutional pressure. If a party's core values are incompatible with supranational governance or its ideology and policy preferences jar with those of the EU, there is a substantive base for Euro-scepticism (figure 3a). On the other hand, the more immediate concerns of maximising votes and winning office are more sensitive to institutional pressure, and may provide incentives for a party to soften Euro-scepticism (figure 3b). The party's position relative to its target electorate depends on a mixture of the two types of pressure. If opposition to European integration is linked to policy or ideological commitment, it is more likely to be located at one (or both) wings of any particular policy dimension than at the centre. Euro-sceptic appeal might therefore limit a party's appeal to 'neutral' voters. Yet the question's salience varies partly with the links between the domestic and EU level (timing of elections, treaties, referendums etc.). Participation in coalition governments that are party to EU deals may involve considerable costs for Euro-sceptic parties. Given that the strategies of cross-cutting and flanking opposition entail at least partial rejection of the catch-all strategy, these dynamics cannot be expected to play out the same way across the three strategies.

3. Party Identity and Organisation – the Corner Stone of Opposition to European Integration

The first of political parties' four goals – survival of the organisation – warrants focus on the party's origins and long-tern evolution as well as its organisation and links with extra-parliamentary organisations. These factors lie at the core of Panebianco's (1988) analysis of party organisation and power. The genesis of parties, in terms of how they emerge as central organisations that diffuse throughout the polity or peripheral organisations that penetrate the core, and their links with external sponsoring organisations, allows for distinctions within and across party families. Focus on the origins of parties helps prevent problematic classifications of for example the Scandinavian protestant Christian parties as continental-style Christian democrats.

Figure 3A: ***Long term goals and incentives for Euro-scepticism***

Core policy preferences	The party's origin and identity, in terms of salience to members	
	Compatible with supranational governance	Focus on national and participatory democracy
Core policy preferences compatible with EU membership	No Euro-scepticism	Soft Euro-scepticism
Core policy preferences incompatible with EU membership	Soft Euro-scepticism	Hard Euro-scepticism

Figure 3B: ***Shorter term goals and incentives faced by Euro-sceptic parties***

Coalition government	Vote-seeking	
	Pro-EU electorate	Anti-EU electorate
Coalition politics exerts moderating effect	Abandon Euro-scepticism	Soften Euro-scepticism
Coalition politics exerts little moderating effect	Soften Euro-scepticism	Harden Euro-scepticism

Although parties can and do change, and may transcend their original aims and organisation, a degree of continuity characterises most parties. Parties' identities therefore tend to shape debates on how they should respond to new questions such as European integration.

In the light of the three main ideological strands that have given rise to broad centre-left and -right parties it is hardly surprising that Euro-scepticism is the exception rather than the rule. Nationalism sits uneasily with both socialist and liberal ideology (Schopflin 1993, 1995). Even if liberals have at times allied with nationalists, their primary focus on the individual rather than community renders such marriages fragile. Something similar holds for socialism's primary focus on class, even if some socialist parties have seen free market European integration as a threat. In both cases Euro-scepticism is contingent. On the centre-right, Catholic Christian democracy's acceptance of the supranational church and its doctrine of subsidiarity meant that multi-layered authority and the principles behind European integration were familiar (Wilke/Wallace 1990). Even free market conservatives, particularly in Scandinavia, usually find supranational arrangements an acceptable price for free trade, though the British and Czech cases suggest that this varies with policy (Hanley 1999). Only more protectionist or traditionalist strands of conservatism, some of which emerged as significant in post-communist East Central Europe, are difficult to reconcile with European integration in principle. In Western Europe the major parties as a rule played down ideology as they adopted catch-all strategies. Much the same holds for the social democrat and reform communist parties in East Central Europe. The centre-right is however divided between parties that sought to invoke a 'return to the West' and those that invoked the inter-war historical legacy (Sitter 2002b). The latter, and those that model themselves on British Thatcherites, are more prone to Euro-scepticism.

The second factor related to parties' origins and structures is internal organisation. Herein lies the key to the catch-all parties' potential for Euro-scepticism. By adopting 'broad church' strategies that welcome a range of interests and degrees of ideological commitment, both socialist and conservative parties allow for more or less nationalist factions. To the extent that these factions are associated with protectionist inter-

ests, or more traditionalist nation-oriented values, they have much in common with territorial interest parties. In the British, German and French party systems the currents that may be considered the equivalent of the territorial opposition in Scandinavia have remained within the mainstream parties, albeit often at the margins. The challenge for catch-all parties is how to handle internal dissent on the European question.

The third element that may shape parties' broad pro- or anti-European commitment is external organisations that sponsor the party. Although the catch-all model entails a decline in extra-parliamentary organisations' influence, protectionist trade unions have strengthened Euro-sceptic strands within social democrat parties in cases where the EU is perceived as more free-market-oriented than the state (Ashford 1992; Ryden 2000; Saglie 2000). In post-communist East Central Europe there has been some scope for protectionism on the centre-right as well, from churches as well as from the trade union wing of Solidarity in Poland (see country chapters in Taggart/Szczerbiak forthcoming).

The principal exceptions to these generalisations are parties that have eschewed the catch-all strategy, and have more or less retained focus on the ideology, interest or identity on which the party was originally based. Norway provides the two classic examples: the old liberal left spawned two new parties during the interwar era, an agrarian party designed to represent farmers' interests and a peripheral Christian party created to put forward pietist candidates (Nelsen 1993). Similar parties were established elsewhere in the Nordic region. Like the Northern Irish unionist parties these peripheral parties have perceived the EU as a threat to their core ideology and values. The Norwegian Centre party still does, as do the East Central European agrarian parties (Batory/Sitter forthcoming). The Scandinavian Christian parties have adopted more ambivalent approaches to European integration than their continental counterparts, based partly on their dissident origins (Madeley/Sitter 2003). The same holds for many post-communist 'Christian national' parties. However, elsewhere the EU has been seen as the ally of minorities and regional parties rather than a threat (De Winter 2001).

Finally, protest parties make fertile ideological ground for Euro-scepticism inasmuch as opposition to the prevailing consensus at the domestic level may be extended to the EU level. This is the core of Taggart's 'touchstone of dissent' thesis, which concludes that "protest parties may use their position on the EU as one means of differentiating themselves from the established parties" (1998, 382). Openly nationalist parties are obvious candidates for Euroscepticism. East Central Europe boasts the key examples, from Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (Henderson 2001) to Poland's League of Polish Families (Szczerbiak 2002), but Austria's Freedom Party (Fallend 2002) and Denmark's Progress and Danish People's Parties are important West European cases. On the left flank, left-socialist parties (Christensen 1996) and unreformed communists have opposed European integration as too free-market oriented and insufficiently internationalist.

In terms of the origins, ideology and identity of parties this distinction between mainstream catch-all parties and their rivals suggests that there are considerable differences among parties' propensities to Euro-scepticism. With a few significant exceptions, catch-all parties provide much poorer bases for principled opposition to European integration, although many feature Euro-factions. The importance of how dissent is handled was amply illustrated by the Norwegian Labour Party's 1972 and 1994 referendum campaigns: the first caused a split while the second was more permissive (Saglie 2000). As far as hard Euro-scepticism is concerned, the protest and interest parties provide more fertile ground.

4. Party Policy – the Content of Euro-Scepticism

If a party's identity is the cornerstone of its approach to European integration, its policies provide the content of Euro-scepticism. Yet policy preferences are by nature more contin-

gent than identity, and may evolve faster than a party's identity or organisation. Even if a party's policy preferences remain relatively stable, their correlation with EU policy may change or alternatives may become obsolete. The policy content of the 'box' labelled Euro-scepticism may therefore change with the evolution of party preferences, domestic policy and/or EU policy.

For the catch-all parties the central question has been to what extent the EU represents a move from the domestic status quo in a desirable or undesirable direction, particularly with respect to economic policy. This explains the propensity of the centre-right and -left parties to resist or welcome European integration as the EU shifts between free market orientation and regulation-oriented integration (Hooghe/Marks/Wilson 2002). The most prominent examples are the British Labour Party's conversion from hard Euro-sceptic to pro-EU in the decade after the 1983 defeat, and the almost parallel but milder rise of Euro-scepticism among Conservative right-wing ranks (Daniels 1998; Garry 1995). The same sometimes holds for foreign policy. A combination of economic policy, corporatism, neutrality and consensual democracy shaped Sweden's approach to the EU up to 1990 (Miles 1997). Whereas Social Democrat Prime Minister Erlander aborted the first emergent EU debate in 1961 by declaring membership incompatible with Swedish neutrality, the party reversed positions swiftly after the collapse of the Berlin Wall and adopted a pro-EU stance as early as October 1990. In post-communist East Central Europe the question is complicated by the 'underdeveloped' nature of the conservative right (Schopflin 1993). To the extent that parties focus more on collective values than the free market, they have reasons to question the liberalising impact of EU membership. The increasingly populist turn of the liberal Federation of Young Democrats (Fidesz) in Hungary after its poor showing in the 1994 elections opened for a shift to soft Euro-scepticism as the party became increasingly critical of big (international) business (Batory 2002). However, in the Czech Republic Klaus's Civic Democrats (ODS) adopted much the same approach as the soft Euro-sceptic wing of the British Conservatives (Hanley 1999), criticising the EU from a free market and Atlanticist perspective.

As far as the parties that compete across the left vs. right dimension are concerned, core policy preferences are often the key to Euro-scepticism. Or so the Euro-sceptic 'territorial' parties that have turned pro-EU suggest. A combination of pietism, defence of national sovereignty and specific concerns such as the EU alcohol policy shaped Euro-scepticism in the Norwegian Christian People's Party and the Finnish Christian League (SKL 1999). However, the latter has since reversed its position, partly as a consequence of EU membership (SKL 2003). Likewise, whereas the Nordic agrarian parties (except the catch-all Danish *Venstre*, Bille 1994) share ideological bases that are conducive to Euro-scepticism because the parties represent the periphery against a pro-EU centre, their differences can be explained in terms of policy. The Swedish party converted to a pro-EU stance after the Social Democrats' U-turn, but this was driven by a re-evaluation of access to the Single Market and the Common Agricultural Policy (Ryden 2000). A similar process is underway with respect to fisheries policy and the Progressive Party in Iceland. The reverse process is rarer, but can be found in the Italian *Lega Nord's* hardening Euro-scepticism in the second half of the 1990s. Its last Euro-election programme called for a confederate union, advocating communities' 'constitutional right of annulment' of the application of EU law, thus rejecting the 'continental super-state' (Lega Nord 1999).

It is less surprising that the salient policies of parties that operate on the left and right flanks tend to conflict with EU policies, inasmuch as they oppose the mainstream consensus. Left-socialists' and unreconstructed communists' opposition to ('capitalist') European integration partly reflects the EU's focus on market integration, and other protectionist parties in post-communist Europe have been drawn toward similar stances. In the Netherlands the new List Pim Fortuyn adopted the Euro-sceptic stance of its leader (Harmsen 2002), but the EU question has been more problematic for populist anti-tax parties on the far right in countries for which

EU membership would entail pressure for lower taxes and prices. Hence the mixed or even pro-EU strategies adopted by the Norwegian and Swedish right-populists, even if they may share their Danish counterparts' suspicions of EMU as an interventionist project.

In this strategy-oriented model, a party's longer term propensity for Euro-scepticism is the product of a combination of its identity and core policy aims. Catch-all parties are less prone to ideological opposition to European integration, but some oppose aspects of it when domestic and EU policy jar. Changing positions on European integration may therefore be explained in terms of policy, particularly economic and foreign policy. However, this is not the case to the same extent for interest or protest parties, for which policy preferences and ideology correlate more strongly. Here the motive for party formation has tended to be protest or opposition, and EU or domestic policy change is less significant.

5. The Pursuit of Votes – Electoral Incentives and Euro-Scepticism

Whereas a party's identity and policy preferences shape its overall strategic approach to European integration, its pursuit of votes and office affects the way this is translated into actual Euro-scepticism. The classic assumption that parties seek to maximise votes suggests convergence on the median voters in a two-party system, and even a degree of median-voter-centred policy outcomes in multi-party systems (Downs 1957). If Euro-scepticism is not a single dimension, but is linked to political competition on existing dimensions, it is unlikely to be salient or strong at the centre of the party system. This is not to say that parties or voters that lie near the median on the left vs. right dimension will not oppose European integration, but merely to suggest that to the extent that they do, this opposition will be linked to another (territorial) dimension. As far as the catch-all parties are concerned, the median voter is pro-EU, whereas the voters for whom opposition to European integration is salient are likely to be located at the right wings of centre-right parties and left of the centre-left parties. Although the catch-all strategy is usually associated with Downsian competition, some catch-all parties choose platforms that pull the party towards the left or right flank rather than the centre in attempts to influence or shape median-voter preferences rather than accommodate them (Dunleavy 1991). The British Conservatives and *Forza Italia* tried this in 2001, and moved into a more Euro-sceptic policy space. Conversely, for the British and German centre-left the decision to compete close to the centre precluded Euro-scepticism (Lees 2002).

This dilemma is, if anything, stronger for parties that compete on cross-cutting dimensions or at the flanks, because they face tradeoffs between targeting their core constituency and seeking to attract votes from the wider electorate. If they target a Euro-sceptic constituency in a pro-EU country, as for example the Swedish Left party or the Hungarian Independent Smallholders, this limits their appeal. Moreover, they may be crowded out if more mainstream parties adopt Euro-sceptic positions, as has been the case with the Smallholders and the Hungarian Justice and Life Party after Fidesz's soft Euro-sceptic turn. Even parties that compete on the flanks of the party system face a trade-off between maintaining their protest-oriented electoral appeal and attempting to poach voters from their neighbours. The Austrian Freedom Party, Italian National Alliance and the List Pim Fortuyn have all played down Euro-scepticism during campaigns in competition with their mainstream centre-right rivals. The Norwegian Progress Party provides one of the few cases of the opposite, as it played down its support for EU membership.

The first powerful force that might cause parties to modify or soften their Euro-scepticism is thus the pursuit of votes. However, in most cases this results in silence on the European question during electoral campaigns rather than durable change. It has been easier for small parties with more clearly delineated target electorates to capitalise on opposition to European integration than for catch-all parties. The parties that have adopted hard Euro-sceptic platforms or long-

term soft Euro-scepticism have only persisted where, as in Norway, Poland and Finland, an overwhelming share of their core electorate opposes EU membership. Where the core electorate has changed towards a more pro-EU stance, whether because interests change (Swedish farmers) or the party outgrows its origins (the Swedish Christians Democrats), the party has faced considerable incentives to adopt a pro-EU position.

6. The Quest for Office – Executive Constraints on Euro-Scepticism

Even if identity and policy preferences are conducive to Euro-scepticism and electoral competition reinforces this, the quest for participation in executive office may constrain party-based Euro-scepticism. If a party's electoral incentives depend on its nearest competitors not having crowded out the Euro-sceptic space, this means that the party's potential coalition partners are likely to be pro-EU and coalition games are likely to exert a constraining effect. Because governing parties in EU member states tend to be party to EU policy deals and to defend these (Hix/Lord 1996), executive office is more likely to constrain Euro-sceptics than pro-EU parties. This also holds for applicant countries and countries that participate in aspects of European integration (e.g. the European Economic Area). Conversely, spells in opposition are usually the consequence of electoral defeat, and defeat tends to render debates over party strategy more legitimate and salient. Opposition also makes it difficult to buy off or discipline internal dissent. Not only do the moderating constraints of office not operate when a party is in opposition, but Euro-sceptic strands within the party may be freer to operate.

The moderating effect of office appears to apply across party systems and party strategies. The two main British parties have famously proven more Euro-sceptic during spells of opposition. Fidesz's above-mentioned populist turn in Hungary was a reassessment in the light of electoral defeat. Severeal Euro-sceptic parties have softened or abandoned their Euro-scepticism when in office. In Greece, PASOK quietly turned after winning the 1981 election (Verney 1996). The Italian communists' experience in the 1970s suggests that even aspiration to office may have a similar effect. Perhaps the most blatant case is that of the Finnish Centre Party in 1994, when Esko Aho's threat to resign as party leader and prime minister secured a sceptical party's support for EU membership (Rauino 1999). Milder versions can be found in the constraints placed on *Lega Nord* in Italy, the Freedom Party in Austrian and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL). The main exception to this rule so far has been Norway, where centre-right coalitions broke up over European integration in 1971 and 1990 and the current coalition features a 'suicide-clause' that precludes raising the EU question. Together with the Finnish Christian League's departure from the coalition that took the country into the EU and the recent collapse of coalitions that included the Austrian Freedom Party, the List Pim Fortuyn and the Polish Peasant Party, this suggests that not only does office constrain Euro-scepticism, but failure to adapt to these constraints severely jeopardises coalitions.

7. Conclusion – Towards a Tamer Shrew?

The model explored above casts Euro-scepticism as a product of party strategy, and herein lies the clue to the 'taming of the shrew'. A party's decision to adopt or modify a Euro-sceptic stance is the product of four strategic considerations: the weight of the party's identity and ideology, the implications of its pursuit of core policy preferences, the incentives it faces in its pursuit of votes and the constraints of coalition politics. In each case, propensities or incentives for Euro-scepticism may be modified. By contrast, few pro-EU parties have moved toward Euro-scepticism for reasons of vote maximisation or office. Party identity and organisation make up the starting point identification of the actual or potential 'shrew'. With the exception of catch-all parties that draw on explicitly nationalist ideology, the extent to which catch-all parties provide a fertile base for

Euro-scepticism depends on their factions. Parties that are rooted in protection on specific interests or in protest are more prone to Euro-scepticism. Policy preferences may both exacerbate and undermine Euro-scepticism. To the extent that some catch-all parties have adopted Eurosceptic platforms, this has been driven by policy concerns. This kind of Euro-scepticism is therefore soft, or contingent. Given the importance of policy to the interest or protest parties, there is more scope for policy reinforcing identity-based opposition to European integration, to produce hard Euro-scepticism. However, the two shorter term dilemmas, how and whether to maximise votes and how much to compromise in the pursuit of office, exert potentially softening effects on most parties.

Hard Euro-sceptic parties are therefore likely to be found at the party systems' cross-cutting dimensions or flanks, in the shape of interest or protest parties, even if some catch-all parties accommodate factions that oppose EU membership. The Greek, Finnish and Swedish evidence suggests that even hard Euro-sceptic parties may soften their opposition to EU membership once the country has joined and realistic policy alternatives change. Even principled opposition to European integration is subject to incentives for modification if policies change, if expansion beyond the party's core electorate is sought, or participation in office secured.

Soft Euro-scepticism is more pervasive, and, by definition, more contingent. However, the distinction between catch-all parties that adopt more Euro-sceptic stances in opposition and protest or issue parties that soften Euro-scepticism remains significant. The former is the most contingent form of Euro-scepticism. Even when a catch-all party bases Euro-scepticism on policy preferences, the pursuit of votes and achievement of office constrains Euro-scepticism in practice. Because soft Euro-scepticism is driven by policy, it is subject to modification if policies or policy alternatives change. The caveat is that this depends on the party leadership's interpretation of changes and its ability to carry the party with it. Here interest parties are generally less flexible. As long as the interest or protest parties focus on their core identity and eschew catch-all strategies they are less likely to adjust to incentives related to vote maximisation and access to office. The purer the interest or protest strategy, the less likely is the effect of short term incentives.

The key to parties' adoption of and changes in Euro-scepticism therefore lies in party strategy, in the sense of the combined goals that shape competition between parties: survival of the party and its core identity, policy preferences, the pursuit of votes and the quest for office. The advantage of this model over more parsimonious cleavage- or policy-oriented models of party-based Euro-scepticism is that it brings the party (or more specifically the party leadership) back in as the central actor. Parties' platforms are shaped by more than their policies, even if policy-focus explains aspects of changes in party-based Euro-scepticism. Identity and organisation provide long term constraints, and concerns for votes and office shape short term incentives. Moreover, three broad strategies, catch-all, interest and protest, are associated with different priorities and choices as far as these four goals are concerned. Euro-scepticism is considered a matter of party strategy and, within the parameters made up by the domestic party system, policy alternatives and EU policy, both its elaboration and change is therefore explained in terms of actors' strategic and tactical choices.

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