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**EDITORS:**

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina DERVISHI**  
**Dr. Mehtap DEMİR**

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**10. INTERNATIONAL  
EUROPEAN CONGRESS ON ADVANCED STUDIES IN BASIC  
SCIENCES**



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# 10. INTERNATIONAL EUROPEAN CONGRESS ON ADVANCED STUDIES IN BASIC SCIENCES

26-28 July 2024  
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28.07.2024

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TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	AFFILIATION
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THE PRINCIPLE OF DIRECT EFFECT OF EU LAW: THE VAN GEND EN LOOS CASE	Ph.D. PRANVERA BEQIRAJ	Aleksandër Moisiu University, Durrës, Albania
THE PRINCIPLE OF SUPREMACY IN THE JURISPRUDENCE OF THE COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EU IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS	Ph.D. PRANVERA BEQIRAJ	Aleksandër Moisiu University, Durrës, Albania
VALUING ENDOGENOUS AND THERMAL RESOURCES IN THE PRODUCTION OF HEALTHY FOOD: CHESTNUT BY-PRODUCT FLOUR WITH THERMAL WATER	Ana Cristina GONÇALVES André LEMOS Maria José ALVES	Vigo University, Faculty of Law, Ourense Campus, Espanha AquaValor—Centro de Valorização e Transferência de Tecnologia da Água, Portugal
CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF MODERN EUROSCEPTICISM	Prof. Milena Apostolovska - Stepanoska Prof.Hristina Runcheva -Tasev	Department of Political Science Department, Faculty of Law, North Macedonia
FOSTERING E-LEARNING IN TEACHING-LEARNING: TRANSFORMING FUTURE EDUCATION IN MODERN ERA	Fr. Baiju Thomas	Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute
EXPLORING CHAT-GPT'S PIVOTAL ROLE IN SHAPING THE LANDSCAPE OF INDUSTRY 4.0	Zohaib Hassan Sain	Superior University, Pakistan
FRIEND OR FOE? ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF PLAGIARISM DETECTION SOFTWARE ON WRITING INSTRUCTION	Zohaib Hassan Sain	Superior University, Pakistan

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# 10. INTERNATIONAL EUROPEAN CONGRESS ON ADVANCED STUDIES IN BASIC SCIENCES

## CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF MODERN EUROSCEPTICISM

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### ABSTRACT

Understanding euroscepticism goes beyond normative concerns about deepening European integration. It encompasses various aspects of political behavior, identities, public policies, democratic legitimacy, economy, ideology, and more. Euroscepticism is a complex and evolving phenomenon that lacks a universally accepted theoretical framework. Broadly, it denotes opposition to the European Union, whether in its entirety as a supranational entity or in its current structure, form, and political trajectory. Furthermore, euroscepticism manifests across the political spectrum, from left to right. Factors such as economic crises, fiscal policies, and the refugee crisis have intensified negative sentiments toward the EU among its populace. This environment has fostered the growth of eurosceptic parties and groups espousing populist and nationalist agendas. This study aims to delineate the contemporary dimensions of euroscepticism within the EU, following a review of the theoretical framework and essential conceptual clarifications related to euroscepticism. The results indicate that euroscepticism primarily revolves around concerns regarding sovereignty, identity, and the level of trust in national political systems. Additionally, euroscepticism correlates with the two significant crises that have challenged the EU and considerably tarnished its reputation: the economic crisis and the refugee crisis.

**Keywords:** Euroscepticism, European integration, European Union.

#### 1. Defining the Euroscepticism

The term "euroscepticism" is widely used but lacks a specific, universally accepted definition. According to some scientists euroscepticism broadly encompasses varying degrees of opposition, from mild to absolute, towards the European integration process.<sup>13</sup> Taggart and Szczerbiak categorize euroscepticism within political parties into two main types: hard and soft. Hard euroscepticism refers to parties that fundamentally advocate for their countries to leave the European Union, with opposition to the European project being a core tenet. On the other hand, soft euroscepticism involves opposition to specific EU policies or beliefs that these policies negatively impact national interests, without rejecting the European project as a fundamental principle of the party.

In a different approach, some other authors build upon David Easton's foundational distinction among the different types of backing for political regimes.<sup>14</sup> They identify two dimensions for analyzing endorsement or skepticism towards European integration. They differentiate between "diffuse" and "specific" support for European integration. Diffuse support pertains to backing the overarching concepts of European integration that underpin the EU. Specific support relates to the practical implementation of European integration, meaning how the EU currently operates and its trajectory.

The first dimension, "support for the ideas of European integration," distinguishes between "Europhiles" and "Europhobes." Europhiles, as some authors define embrace the fundamental principles of European integration upon which the EU is founded. Europhobes, on the other hand, do not endorse and often

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<sup>13</sup> Taggart, P., & Szczerbiak, A. (2004). Contemporary Euroscepticism in the party systems of the European Union

candidate states of Central and Eastern Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, 43(1): 1-27.

<sup>14</sup> Kopecký, P., & Mudde, C. (2002). The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe. *European Union Politics*, 3(3): 297-326.

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oppose these foundational concepts, rejecting one or more of the ideas that form the bedrock of European integration.

The second dimension, "support for the European Union," separates "EU optimists" from "EU pessimists." Optimists believe in the current state of the EU and its ongoing development, either because they are content with its current operation or because they are optimistic about its future direction. EU pessimists, conversely, are dissatisfied with the current state of the EU or hold negative expectations about its future trajectory. It's important to note that being an EU pessimist doesn't necessarily imply opposition to EU membership; some simply believe that the current EU configuration diverges significantly from their understanding of the core principles of European integration and aspire to reform it.

In this context it is important to mention Mats Braun<sup>15</sup> who is political scientist whose research focuses on Euroscepticism and its implications for European integration and national sovereignty. His work typically examines several key aspects of Euroscepticism:

1. Impact on National Sovereignty: Braun explores how Eurosceptic movements and attitudes within member states challenge or advocate for the preservation of national sovereignty in the face of increasing European integration. This includes analysis of legal, political, and economic implications.

2. Political and Public Opinion Dynamics: He studies how Euroscepticism influences political behavior, party systems, and electoral outcomes across different European countries. This involves examining the rise of Eurosceptic parties, their rhetoric, and their impact on mainstream political agendas.

3. Policy Implications: Braun likely examines how Eurosceptic attitudes affect policy-making within the European Union. This includes assessing the negotiation of treaties, the implementation of EU directives, and the dynamics of intergovernmental cooperation versus supranational integration.

4. Comparative Analysis: His research may involve comparative studies of Euroscepticism across European countries, looking at variations in public opinion, political mobilization, and policy outcomes.

5. EU Institutions and Democratic Legitimacy: Braun might also explore debates surrounding the democratic deficit within EU institutions as perceived by Eurosceptic movements and the broader public. This involves questioning the accountability and transparency of EU decision-making processes. Overall, Mats Braun's contributions to the field of political science provide nuanced insights into the multifaceted nature of Euroscepticism, its drivers, and its consequences for European integration and national sovereignty. His work helps to illuminate the complex interplay between national identities, political ideologies, and the evolving role of the European Union in contemporary Europe.

### 2. Factors that Influence Euroscepticism

Euroscepticism refers to skepticism or criticism towards the European Union (EU), its policies, and its institutions. The economic crisis, such as the global financial crisis of 2008-2009 and the subsequent Eurozone crisis, significantly contributed to the rise of euroscepticism for several reasons:

1. Economic Hardship: The economic crises led to widespread unemployment, austerity measures, and economic downturns in many EU member states. Citizens experiencing economic hardship often blamed EU policies for exacerbating their situations. Austerity measures imposed by the EU and bailout conditions imposed on countries like Greece by the EU and IMF were particularly contentious, leading to perceptions of loss of sovereignty and unfair economic burden-sharing.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Mats Braun (2019). Postfunctionalism, Identity and the Visegrad Group.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336977963\\_Postfunctionalism\\_Identity\\_and\\_the\\_Visegrad\\_Group](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336977963_Postfunctionalism_Identity_and_the_Visegrad_Group) visited on 15.07.2024.

<sup>16</sup> George Nastos, Conceptual and empirical analysis of modern Euroscepticism: The cases of France, United Kingdom and Italy, In book: Sidiropoulos, S., Tzagkarakis, S.-I., Kritas, D. (2021), 1st POLITEIA International Conference Proceedings. Europe at the Crossroads: Leadership, Challenges and State of Play (pp.121-137) Edition: 1st Chapter: 5.1 Publisher: Hellenic Association of Political Scientists - HAPSc

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2. Perceived Democratic Deficit: Many eurosceptics argue that the EU suffers from a democratic deficit, meaning that its decision-making processes are seen as distant, opaque, or not directly accountable to voters. During economic crises, decisions made by EU institutions (such as the European Commission and the European Central Bank) that affect national economies can be viewed as undemocratic or unrepresentative of national interests.

3. National Identity and Sovereignty: Economic crises can provoke a resurgence in nationalism and a desire to reclaim national sovereignty. Eurosceptics often argue that the EU imposes policies that undermine national sovereignty and cultural identity. Economic hardships can amplify these concerns, leading to increased support for nationalist or anti-EU political parties and movements.

4. Inequality and Social Cohesion: Economic downturns can widen economic inequalities within and between EU member states. This can lead to social discontent and a perception that the EU's policies exacerbate inequalities rather than address them. Eurosceptic parties may exploit these sentiments to gain support by advocating for policies that prioritize national interests over European integration.

5. Public Perception of EU Institutions: The handling of economic crises by EU institutions, such as the European Central Bank's monetary policies or the European Commission's fiscal rules, can be seen as ineffective or detrimental by affected populations. This can erode public trust in the EU and its ability to manage economic challenges.

Overall, the economic crises in the 2000s and early 2010s intensified existing eurosceptic sentiments and contributed to the electoral success of eurosceptic parties in several EU member states. These parties often campaigned on platforms that critiqued EU policies, advocated for greater national sovereignty, and appealed to citizens' frustrations with economic conditions and perceived loss of control over their own futures.

The other very important factor that influence the Euroscepticism is the EU's handling of the refugee crisis, which reached its peak in 2015-2016 and became a focal point of public dissatisfaction with the union. The surge in refugee and migrant arrivals, predominantly from Syria and other Middle Eastern nations, as well as from North Africa and Asia to the EU, became a rallying cry for various extremist eurosceptic parties. They capitalized on this discontent, often gaining significant electoral support.

Criticism towards the EU regarding the refugee crisis came from a wide spectrum of citizens, commentators, and political parties, regardless of their ideological leanings. Some blamed the EU for not adequately providing essential assistance to those in need, failing to efficiently redistribute refugees, and delaying asylum application processes. Others argued that the EU did not sufficiently protect its external borders, thereby challenging the integrity of the Schengen treaty.

### 3. Euroseptisism in Context of Different Ideologies

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Euroscepticism refers to a spectrum of attitudes and beliefs that question or oppose the European Union (EU), its policies, or the process of European integration. It can manifest differently depending on the ideological perspective of the individuals or groups involved. Here's how euroscepticism aligns with different ideologies:

Conservatism:

Right-wing conservatism: Euroscepticism from the right often stems from concerns about national sovereignty and control over national laws and borders. These conservatives may view the EU as overly bureaucratic, infringing on national identity, and limiting economic freedom. They might advocate for a looser confederation of states rather than a centralized union.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Hans Kundnani (2016) "The Conservative Party and Euroscepticism: A Changing Relationship"

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Liberalism:

Classical liberalism: Liberals might be eurosceptic due to concerns about democratic deficit within the EU institutions or issues related to economic liberalism. They might argue that the EU's regulatory framework restricts free markets and entrepreneurship.

Social liberalism: Some social liberals may be critical of the EU's policies on civil liberties, immigration, or social justice, feeling that EU regulations can undermine these values or fail to address them adequately across member states.

Socialism:

Left-wing socialism: Euroscepticism on the left often focuses on critiques of the EU's economic policies, perceiving them as favoring big business over workers' rights and social welfare. Left-wing eurosceptics may oppose EU austerity measures and advocate for policies that prioritize social equality and workers' rights.

Nationalism:

Nationalist movements: Nationalist eurosceptics are concerned with preserving national sovereignty and cultural identity. They may view the EU as eroding these aspects through its policies on immigration, integration, and economic harmonization. They often prioritize national interests over supranational governance.

Populism:

Populist movements: Populist eurosceptics typically appeal to the general dissatisfaction with established political elites and institutions. They frame the EU as an undemocratic entity that imposes policies without adequate popular consent. They may advocate for returning decision-making power to national governments seen as more responsive to popular will.

Environmentalism:

Green parties and environmentalists: Some environmentalists may be eurosceptic due to concerns about the EU's environmental policies. They may criticize the EU for not being ambitious enough in addressing climate change or for prioritizing economic interests over environmental protection.

In summary, euroscepticism is multifaceted and can arise from various ideological perspectives, each highlighting different aspects of concern ranging from sovereignty and democracy to economic policy and social justice. Understanding euroscepticism in these contexts helps to appreciate the diverse reasons why individuals and political groups might question or oppose the European Union and its integration efforts.

### Conclusion

Euroscepticism is a complex and varied phenomenon that manifests differently across different regions and periods, lacking a universally accepted theoretical framework for its definition. It is not tied to any specific position on the Right-Left political spectrum. Some argue that it is part of a broader emerging divide that encompasses a growing range of issues. Research using Eurobarometer surveys indicates that the Eurozone crisis significantly contributed to the increase in euroscepticism in Europe. However, euroscepticism is not solely driven by economic concerns. Strong dissatisfaction with domestic political systems and the fragmentation of national party systems can also lead to a negative view of the EU's institutions. Additionally, it remains unclear whether the refugee crisis alone was a major factor or if it, combined with the lingering effects of the economic crisis, contributed to the rise in euroscepticism.

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