Political Culture, Values and Economic Utility: A Different Perspective on Norwegian Party-based Euroscepticism

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Abstract

Drawing on a content analysis of party manifestos and a survey of Norwegian MPs, this article examines the nuances in, and the causality of, the different Norwegian parties' Euroscepticism. The study of the comparative party politics of Euroscepticism, which focuses on ideology and strategy, falls short of accounting for the Norwegian case, where, unlike other European countries, the parties' Euroscepticism is exceptionally stable and appears across the political spectrum. Therefore, the article tests an alternative set of theories, drawn from the literature on opinion formation on European integration, to find a more suitable framework for analysing and explaining the motivation of Norwegian Euroscepticism. The analysis shows that Norwegian party-based Euroscepticism can be divided into three types when it comes to its strength and policy opposition, with the Centre Party and the Socialist Left Party on the 'hardest' end of the Euroscepticism scale, followed by the Christian Democratic Party and the Liberal Party, and finally, the Labour Party and the Progress Party. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that Norwegian Eurosceptic party stances on Europe are primarily driven by political values and political culture concerns, except for the Progress Party, which base its Eurosceptic motivation on economic utilitarianism and political culture.

Keywords

Euroscepticism; Norway; Political parties

IN RECENT YEARS, A BURGEONING LITERATURE ON THE TOPIC OF Euroscepticism has emerged. It is widely agreed that this is a result of the changes brought about by the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which implemented the Single Market, introduced Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and ventured into new areas of European Union (EU) level cooperation, and as a corollary prompted more widespread criticism of the European project, both on the public and party levels. The diversified nature and acceleration of European integration post-Maastricht have made European citizens more interested in and critical of EU developments and the workings of the decision-making processes in Brussels (Down and Wilson 2008; Norris 1997). As many European political parties have incorporated elements of Euroscepticism into their political platforms, reflecting the concerns of their constituencies, questions of what drives the politics of Euroscepticism have frequently been posed in what has become a growing literature on the topic.

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Because the EU's existence and individual countries' participation in the project rely on popular support, and the progress and development of EU policy rely on national governments' impetus, there is no doubt that it is important to understand the nature of party-based Euroscepticism, what it is and why it arises. Political parties play a central role in relation to public attitude formation and the shaping of European integration, but not only are they cue givers and agenda-setters, they are also 'gatekeepers' between their political system and the European Union when in government (Zaller 1992; Hoffmann 1966). This equally applies to non-member states where the question of EU membership is subject to a popular referendum and participation in various EU policy areas is determined by the government and/or parliament.

In Norway, the population has blocked EU entry twice through referenda in 1972 and 1994 and opinion polls have, with few exceptions, shown 'no' majorities in the last fifty years. Therefore, it is important to understand the nature of the Euroscepticism that is manifest in the Norwegian party system, what it is and what causes it. Norwegian Euroscepticism makes an intriguing research puzzle for a number of reasons. Firstly, Norway is the only country where political elites have struggled to convince their population of the desirability and benefits of EC/EU membership for almost fifty years. This suggests that, contrary to most other European countries, which have experienced Euroscepticism as a post-Maastricht phenomenon[1], Norwegian Euroscepticism can be traced back to the 1960s, and among the elites perhaps even further (see Pharo 1986). A second curious element of the case is that the official positions of the four parties that adopted anti-membership stances in the 1960s and 1970s, the Socialist Left Party (*Sosialistisk Venstreparti,* SLP), Centre Party (*Senterpartiet,* CP), Christian Democratic Party (*Kristelig Folkeparti,* CDP) and the Liberal Party (*Venstre,* LP), have remained the same ever since. Third, there are significant Eurosceptic factions also in the two largest parties in the national Parliament (the *Storting*), namely the Labour Party (*Arbeiderpartiet*) and the Progress Party (*Fremskrittspartiet,* PP), making the Conservative Party (*Høyre*) the only unrestrained pro-European force in the Norwegian party system. All these elements make Norway a deviant case in the comparative study of party-based Euroscepticism, where Euroscepticism is only expected to be used by parties on the flanks of the party system, as a means of distancing themselves from the party mainstream (Taggart 1998).

This article aims to achieve a better understanding of party-based Euroscepticism in Norway, in other words, the extent to which the different parties oppose European integration and how it can be explained. The article is structured as follows. First, it reviews the trends in the literature on party-based Euroscepticism and presents the theories from the literature on opinion formation on the EU that will be used in the analysis of the case. Secondly, it outlines the focus of the research and the data and methods used. The third and fourth sections present the findings of the study. The article concludes with a discussion of the findings.

Euroscepticism: definitions and causality

Hitherto, the academic debate on party-based Euroscepticism has most commonly revolved around questions of definition, measurement and causality, in other words what Euroscepticism is, how it can be measured and whether ideological or strategic matters have primacy when parties adopt Euroscepticism (*e.g.* Taggart 1998; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2001, 2003; Kopecky and Mudde 2002; Hix 2005; Sitter 2001; Hooghe *et al.* 2004; Crum 2007; Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2008). Since Maastricht and the creation of the European

[1] Even fellow 'reluctant Europeans', Sweden and Switzerland, did not witness deep domestic conflicts over the European issue until the 1990s, because of the incompatibility of their neutrality policies with membership of the EC during the Cold War.

Union, 'Euroscepticism' has been increasingly used as a broad term in both the press and political debates to denote negative attitudes towards European integration and/or the EU. It is "the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration" (Taggart 1998: 366). Taggart and Szczerbiak (2001) provide a useful tool when examining different varieties of Euroscepticism. Their hard/soft dichotomy distinguishes between rejection or opposition to European integration in principle ("hard") and qualified opposition to the EU, such as objection to a single EU policy ("soft"). Although this conceptualisation has attracted criticism for being too broad and over-inclusive[2], it will be adopted for the purposes of the article. This is because more complex typologies (*e.g.* Kopecky and Mudde 2002; Flood 2002; Vasilopoulou 2009) are arguably of limited value when evaluating Norwegian party-based Euroscepticism, which is predominantly cast as opposition to membership of the EU and would thus qualify for a *rejectionist* position in most cases. Therefore, in this case, it is arguably more useful to use the simple distinction between 'harder' and 'softer' types of Euroscepticism.

In European party systems, Euroscepticism is most commonly cast as a "touchstone of dissent" (Taggart 1998) or the "politics of opposition" (Sitter 2001) and, with the exception of 'soft' Eurosceptic rhetoric or factions, is not expected to appear in the party mainstream or governing parties. As mentioned above, in Norway, in contrast, Euroscepticism features in six out of the seven parties represented in the *Storting*: as the official party stance in four of the parties, and as factions in two. Furthermore, in Norway, every government since 1997 have comprised of at least two officially Eurosceptic parties. For example, the two most ardent opponents of European integration in the *Storting*, the SLP and the CP, were re-elected in 2009 for a second term in office with the pro-European Labour Party. In other words, Norwegian Euroscepticism is highly ideologically diverse and is *not* used merely as a means of opposing the mainstream, as the Eurosceptic parties themselves are established governing parties[3]. Moreover, the stability of Norwegian party-based Euroscepticism gives further testament to the contention that it cannot be put down to short-term, strategic considerations. Thus, the existing explanatory theories, which focus on the interplay between ideology, strategy and party system centrality, fall short of accounting for the occurrence and persistence of Norwegian party-based opposition to the EU. Therefore, this article considers the literature on opinion formation on European integration to find an alternative theoretical framework for the study.

Early work on EU opinion formation revolved mainly around Ronald Inglehart's (1977) theories of the "Silent Revolution", that is, post-materialist values and high cognitive skills as predictors for support for European institutions and governance. Early studies also theorised the impact the length of membership of one's country has on support levels (*e.g.* Hewstone 1986; Bosch and Newton 1995). After the Maastricht referenda, however, much focus was shifted to the unpopularity of national governments as determinants of popular Eurosceptic sentiment and the use of proxies in attitude formation (*e.g.* Franklin *et al.* 1994; Anderson 1998) as well as evaluative/utilitarian economic cost/benefit theories (*e.g.* Bosch and Newton 1995; Anderson and Reichert 1996; Gabel 1998). More recent research has moved onto issues of identity (*e.g.* McLaren 2002; Carey 2002), and is very often coupled with one or several of the traditional explanations to account for variations in support for European integration, most commonly the economic interest thesis (*e.g.* Hooghe and Marks 2005; McLaren 2007)[4].

[2] For more comprehensive critiques of the hard/soft conceptualisation and its rivalling typologies, see for example Kopecky and Mudde (2002), Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008) and Vasilopoulou (2009).
[3] With the exception of the SLP, which entered office for the first time in 2005, with the CP and the Labour Party.
[4] It is beyond the scope of this article to look at all of these theories in detail; only the three theories which are incorporated in the analytical framework of the study will be outlined below.

Three of the theories from this body of literature are chosen to form part of the analytical framework for this study. The reason for their selection is that they all fulfil three separate criteria: first, they are all theoretically relevant to Norway (as a non-member state); second, they are established in the literature; and third, they have not already been empirically tested on the Norwegian case. The first theory is that of post-materialism (Inglehart 1977), which suggests that people with post-materialist values are more likely to support European integration than those who have materialist-based value systems. This is due to the expectation that the ideal of supranational governance has a stronger appeal among post-materialists than materialists. Conversely, Gabel (1998) finds the reverse relationship between post-materialist values and support for integration, and Inglehart (1977) also finds that this is the case in Denmark. Because of this, it is here assumed that in Scandinavia, it is post-materialist values rather than materialist values that are related to Euroscepticism. Therefore, the study tests the *reverse* post-materialist thesis. Second, the economic interest (or 'utilitarian') thesis holds that Euroscepticism is a product of egocentric and sociotropic utilitarian considerations and that people form negative attitudes towards the EU if it is seen as a threat to personal and national economic interest (Bosch and Newton 1995; Anderson and Reichert 1996; Gabel 1998; Hooghe and Marks 2005). A third theoretical family promotes the issue of national identity as a predictor of support for the EU, and contends that those who are particularly concerned about threats to the nation-state and thus national integrity are more likely to harbour Eurosceptic attitudes than those who are not (Carey 2002; McLaren 2002, 2007; Hooghe and Marks 2005).

In addition, there are three theories from the Norwegian literature which could have significant explanatory power when it comes to the motivation of the different parties' Euroscepticism. Firstly, it is widely argued that the reason for which the territorial cleavages identified by Rokkan (1967), which were reactivated during both battles over membership, have been so central in the referenda is the historical struggle of the peripheries for independence and representative democracy, and the country's short history of independence (*e.g.* Bjørklund 1997; Gstöhl 2002). The second theory holds that Norwegian Euroscepticism feeds off Scandinavian (or Nordic) exceptionalism. As Wæver (1992: 84) puts it, this exceptionalism implies "being part of Europe, but being a little *better off* than the rest. In what respects? In being more peaceful than Europe and in having more social and global solidarity". In other words, EU membership is seen as a negative external impulse that should be avoided, as "it would accelerate the erosion of a superior form of society" (Lawler 1997: 566; see also Ingebritsen and Larson 1997). Finally, the centrality of agriculture (and fisheries) in the Norwegian debates on the EU has posed the question of why the primary sector managed to rally so many voters to its cause, despite its small and shrinking economic significance. This could be explained by the rural identity thesis, which holds that ingrained in the Norwegian identity is a romanticised identification with the countryside and peasants' culture, which is irreconcilable with EU membership because of the inevitable damage it would cause to Norwegian agriculture and small-scale fisheries (Gstöhl 1996; Neumann 2002).[5]

Although the above six theories are widely cited as possible explanations for opposition to European integration, they have not, with few exceptions, been subjected to empirical testing on Norway before. In order to illustrate the potential of this body of literature to provide explanations for Norwegian party-based Euroscepticism *contra* the party-based Euroscepticism literature, these theories are incorporated into a coding framework for analysing the Norwegian Eurosceptic parties' manifestos.

[5] Contending with a short growing season and extreme weather conditions, Norwegian farmers are quoted as the most subsidised in the world (Bjørklund 1997). In effect, EU membership would effectively mean large cuts in subsidies for farmers and the demise of the agricultural sector in Norway.

Research design

The article poses two central research questions. Firstly, is there a Norwegian party-based Euroscepticism, or are there essentially several different types of Eurosceptic positions in the *Storting*? And secondly, what drives Euroscepticism in the Norwegian parties?

In order to answer the first question, descriptive statistics from an elite survey conducted by the author in the *Storting* in 2006 is used. Questionnaires consisting of nine closed-end questions and one open-ended question were distributed to all of the 169 Members of Parliament (MPs) in the *Storting*. They questioned the individuals' attitudes towards EU membership, various EU initiatives, arguments for and against Norwegian EU membership, and European integration in general. The questionnaires were returned by post over a period of two months, and the response rate to the survey was 52.7 percent.[6] The survey items chosen for the analysis are concerned with support for EU initiatives and arguments against membership.[7] Additionally, data on MPs' attitudes towards EU membership, collected by the *ad hoc* organisation 'No to the EU' (*Nei til EU*) and compiled by Hobøl (2009), is used. The response rate for this survey was 87.6 percent.

To address the second research question, a content analysis of party manifestos, based on six theories from the comparative and Norwegian literature on opinion formation on the EU, is used. In this part of the research, the Conservative and Labour parties are left out because of their official pro-European stance on EU membership; only the manifestos of the four officially Eurosceptic parties' in the *Storting* (the CP, the SLP, the CDP and the LP) and the PP[8] are included in the analysis.

As the rationale behind the second part of the study is to illustrate that alternative debates to that of ideology *versus* strategy must be promoted in order to explain Norwegian party-based Euroscepticism, manifestos arguably provide an adequate basis to conduct this experiment. One of the benefits of using party manifestos is that they provide consistent expressions of formal positions through time and are carefully thought-out products of democratic processes within each of the parties. Additionally, there are no gaps in the data for any of the parties studied, as all the parties produce manifestos ahead of every election. If one was to include, for example, political speeches in the research, this would inevitably create an imbalance in the material analysed, as speeches made by CDP and LP politicians on the issue of the EU are very difficult to come by. Although the Norwegian *Storting* parties' manifestos vary significantly from year to year, particularly with regard to size, this does not have significant implications for the research. What *is* important is that the data material in each year is comparable across the parties; as all the parties at all times are influenced by the same external factors at any given time, the domestic situation and the salience and visibility of the EU question, the manifestos provide a good basis for comparison across parties. The manifestos from 1989 onwards include quite expansive sections on European integration, and thus proffer an adequate basis for testing the chosen set of explanatory theories. However, it should be noted that the CDP and LP's sections on Europe are more limited than those of the CP and SLP. In effect, items coded from the latter's manifestos are

[6] Although the survey produced an overall good response rate, it should be noted that the response rates for the various parties differ somewhat, and that for some of the parties, the smaller parties in particular, the response limits the extent to which inferences about the whole party can be made. Within the parties, the response rates were: 44% for Labour; 65% for the Conservatives; 63% for Progress; 55% for the Christian Democrats; 30% for the Liberals; 73% for the Centre party; and 40% for the Socialist Left.

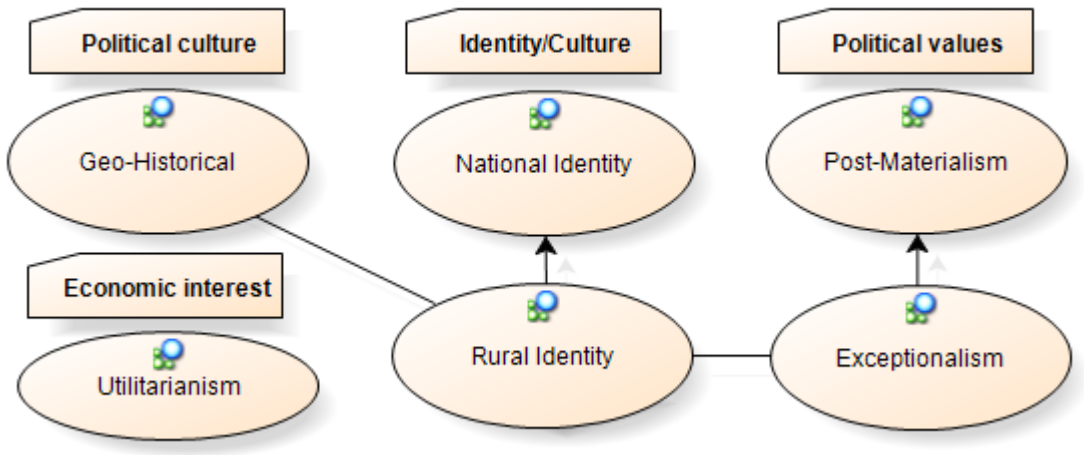
[7] The arguments listed in the question were arguments commonly used in the 1994 campaign (Sciarini and Listhaug 1997: 429), as well as direct costs of membership and Norwegian internationalism.

[8] The PP is included despite its earlier pro-membership stance and current non-stance because some of its manifestos reflect clear reservations about the EU, most conspicuously, the 1993 manifesto. It should be noted, however, that due to the limited number of manifestos directing any criticism (or praise) at the EU, the results on the PP are somewhat limited.

more plentiful than those from the former's. Therefore, the analysis considers coding category percentages per party to be able to compare across parties.

In essence, the manifesto study assesses the extent to which the Norwegian Eurosceptic parties' Euroscepticism touches on issues related to post-materialism, economic interest, national identity, geo-historical issues, Nordic exceptionalism and rural identity. The coding strategy used is directed content analysis, whereby the initial coding starts with a theoretical framework, but new codes are allowed to emerge during the analysis, as the categories are not expected to be exhaustive. They are not expected to be mutually exclusive either; therefore, any unit of analysis[9] can be assigned to more than one category. The coding model used is illustrated in Figure 1 below. 'Economic interest' and 'geo-historical' factors stand alone as separate categories; 'rural identity' and 'national identity' are coupled under an 'identity/culture' heading; and the 'exceptionalism' and 'post-materialism' factors are grouped into a 'political values' category.

Figure 1: The pre-defined coding categories



The 'political culture' category is based on the theory that Norway's short history as an independent country and the periphery's strong political tradition are central to Norwegian opposition to EC/EU membership. The code encompasses argumentation that casts opposition to the European project as a furthering of the Norwegian struggle for democracy and independence, which started in the nineteenth century. It holds that *folkestyre* (participatory democracy) and independence are closely interlinked and extremely central to Norwegian political culture; the ruling view is that the people (*folket*) should rule, not elites in a distant centre.

Because morality is one of the underlying features of post-materialist values, and all of the ideals connected to exceptionalism or the Nordic "superior form of society" are rooted in solidarity and equality (Lawler 1997: 556; Dahl 1984), and thus, morality, 'exceptionalism' is treated as a sub-category of 'post-materialism'. Argumentation which could be classified as ideologically left-wing is also treated under this heading, because, as Dahl (1984: 97, 106) observes, "the appeal of social justice and equality in party politics" is no Social Democratic

[9] A text chunk of any size, representative of a single theme.

or socialist invention, but "goes back to at least the 1890s [… when] it was propelled into the bodies politic by the Liberals" and has since then been pursued by all the traditional parties, from the left to the right.

In the academic literature on Norway, much emphasis has been put on the ability of the primary sector to rally sympathisers to its cause, a phenomenon which can be explained by the concept of a rural identity: Norwegians' attachment to nature, the countryside and peasant culture (Gstöhl 1996; Neumann 2002). With two identity theories to be tested, 'rural identity' is treated as a part of the 'national identity', as the concept is not tied to specific territories within Norway, rather to the *idea* of a rural or peripheral location (Aarebrot 1982), in principle shared by the urban and rural populations in Norway alike. Rural culture and values are also linked to political values because the notion of 'leftish-ness', as associated with post-materialist values, is "a cluster of values that [speaks] to the ideals of nearly all rural factions" (Dahl 1984: 98). Additionally, the territorial and cultural dimensions of the identity grouping make it necessary to indicate a link to the 'geo-historical' category.

The final category, 'economic interest', covers economic and material concerns. The utilitarian thesis holds that people who believe that they personally or the country as a whole will lose out economically due to European integration are more likely to oppose EC/EU membership. Therefore, Eurosceptic argumentation centring on economic and/or material utility is coded to this category. Additionally, during the coding, another theme emerged: that of economic liberalist sentiments. This is treated as a separate category, but can be linked to economic interest, because the focus on economic matters implies a preoccupation with economic growth.

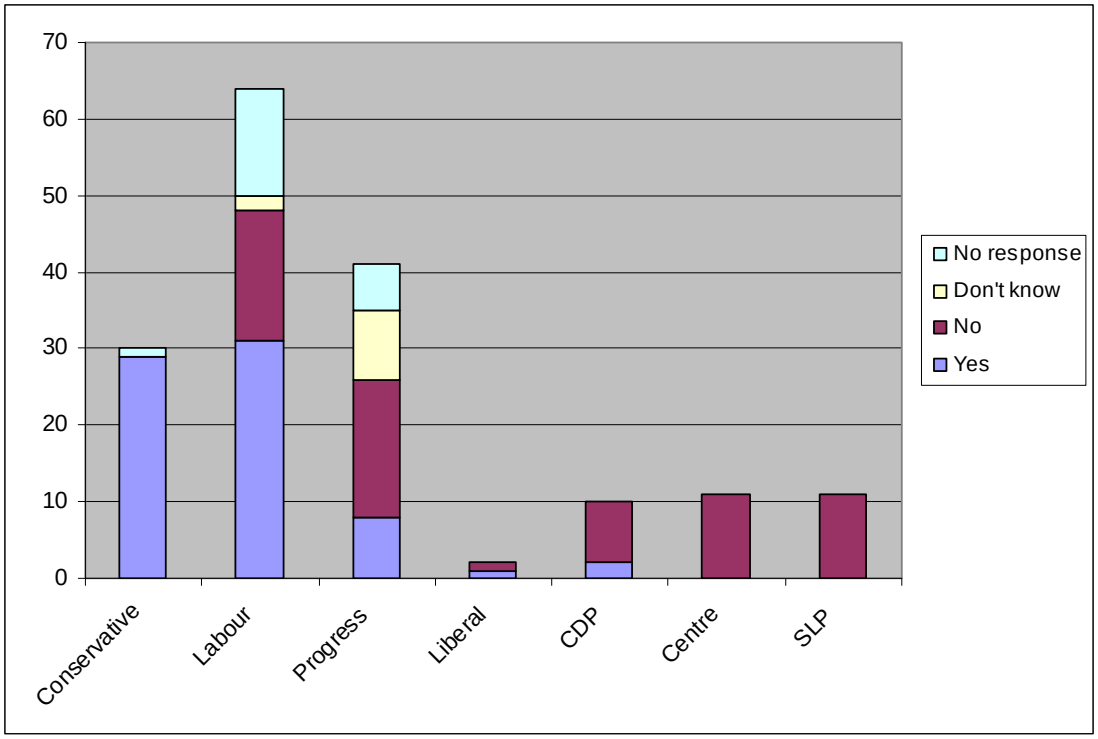
The following section reports on the findings of the elite survey and discusses the similarities and differences between the Euroscepticism of the different parties in the *Storting*, whereas the subsequent section deals with the results of the content analysis.

Findings of the elite survey

Hobøl's (2009) report shows that there is still a majority of MPs in favour of EU membership, but, as can be seen in Figure 2 below, the difference between the 'yes' and 'no' camps in the *Storting* is decreasing. To the question 'do you think that Norway should become a member of the EU?', 69 MPs said 'yes', 67 said 'no', and 11 opted for 'don't know'. The elite survey shows that the MPs' positions on EU membership have remained very stable between 1994 and 2006 in all of the parties, except the PP, where the proportion of pro-European MPs has declined significantly. Indeed the PP's increasing electoral success in the last decade and its MPs' swing towards Euroscepticism can account for much of the change in support for EU membership in the *Storting*. Whereas in 1993 the party only held ten of the 165 seats in the *Storting*, it currently holds 41 (out of 169), and 18 of these are decisively against membership of the EU (while eight are for, nine are undecided and six did not participate in the survey).

On the level of internal divisions, the Conservative Party reveals no signs of Eurosceptic factionalism, and on the other side of the scale, the CP and the SLP are united in their 'hard' Euroscepticism, with all their MPs rejecting EU membership. The LP, on the other hand, literally has two feet in each camp; its two MPs have different preferences on the issue of membership. In the Labour Party, the anti-membership faction comprises around a third of the party's MPs, while in the CDP, the pro-membership MPs are in minority. Only two of the CDP's ten MPs are supportive of membership.

Figure 2: MPs' opinion on EU membership according to party, 2009



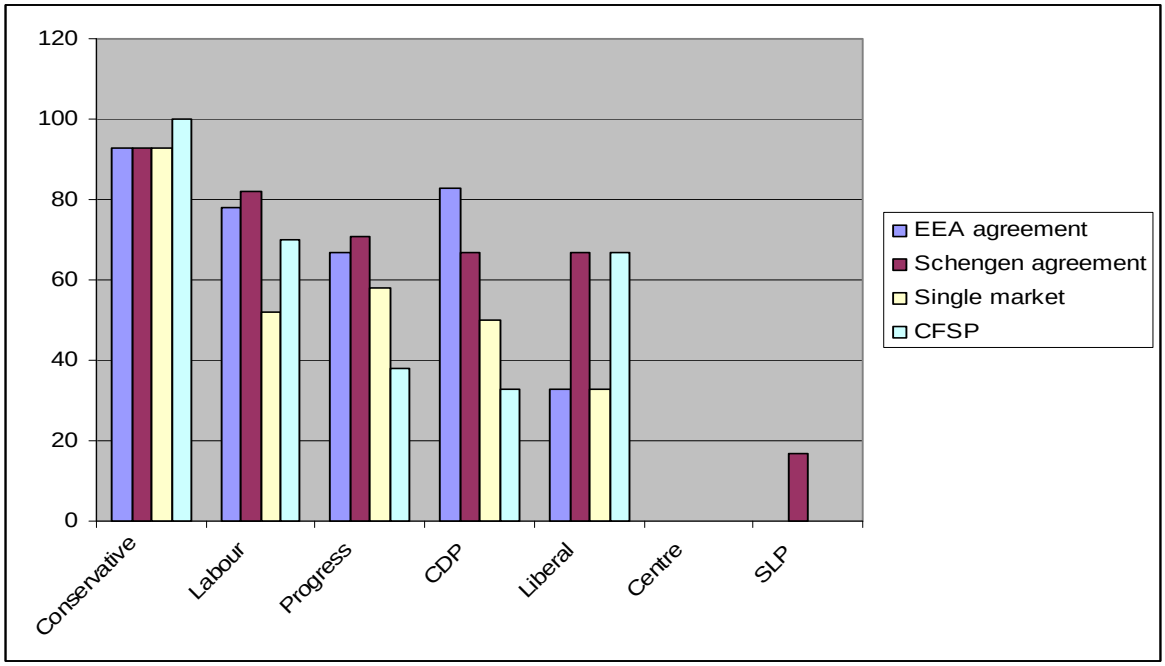
Source: adapted from Hobøl (2009: 3)

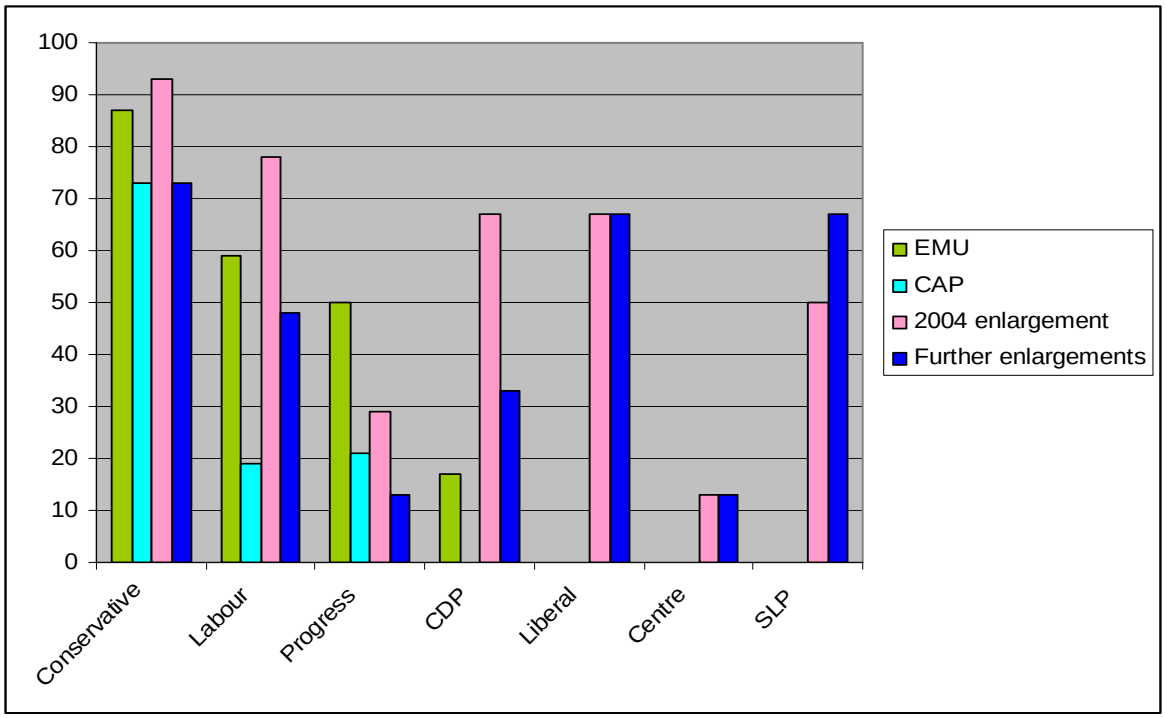
According to the survey results displayed in Figure 3 below, the CP can clearly be located on the 'hardest' end of the Euroscepticism scale. Not only do all of the party's MPs oppose membership, all the respondents in the survey also reject the European Economic Area (EEA) and Schengen agreements, the Single Market, the Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP), EMU and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Only one of the eight CP respondents supports any of the EU policies listed, and that is enlargement.

The SLP is not much 'softer' in its Euroscepticism. With the exception that one of the six respondents supports the Schengen agreement, the SLP MPs mirrors the CP MPs' opposition; support for the EU initiatives is limited to EU enlargement. However, here, there is a significant difference in that SLP support for enlargement is much more widespread: half of the party's MPs are supportive of the 2004 enlargement and two-thirds are in favour of further enlargement. This is possibly due to support for solidarity with the less developed parts of Europe.[10]

[10] As indicated by the response to another survey item, which asked whether the respondents thought that joining the EU would show Norwegian solidarity with the less developed parts of Europe. Whereas three of the six SLP respondents replied 'yes' to this statement, only one of the eight CP MPs did.

Figure 3: MPs' support for EU policy initiatives (percentage of party's respondents[11])





Source: author's (2006) elite survey

[11] Percentages are used for purposes of cross-party comparisons.

Two of the three LP respondents are also, despite their opposition to EU membership[12], supportive of the enlargement. Equally, two-thirds of the CDP respondents are positive towards the 2004 enlargement, but only two of the six CDP MPs are in favour of further enlargements. A possible explanation for this is that the Christian Democrats could have reservations about the negative impact a prospective membership of Turkey, with its considerable Muslim population, could have on the Christian values that the party champions. Moreover, the support levels for Schengen and the Single Market are relatively similar in both parties, but seem to be higher for the EEA and lower for the CFSP in the CDP compared to the LP. However, because of the limited number of respondents from both parties, it is doubtful whether these differences are of any particular significance. Nevertheless, it is curious that only one of the three LP respondents expresses support for the EEA agreement, considering the party's official pro-EEA stance.

Among the PP MPs, the elements of opposition are quite different to the rest of the parties. It seems that the PP's attitudes toward EU policies are the complete opposite of the two hardest Eurosceptic parties, as the initiatives receiving (most) support from the SLP and CP MPs are those which receive the least support from the PP; enlargements to the east are not very popular with the PP MPs. This could be a reflection of the party's negative attitudes generally to redistribution and foreign aid, or alternatively, the party's desire to restrict immigration to Norway. Otherwise, the PP's policy support is relatively similar to that of the Labour MPs: participation in Schengen and economic integration, the Single Market, the EEA and to some extent even the EMU, receive overall high support, but there are more reservations about the CAP in both parties.

When it comes to policy opposition, what seems to unite all the Eurosceptics in the *Storting* is opposition to the CAP. Moreover, Norwegian Eurosceptic MPs are, the PP excepted, positive towards enlargement despite their rejection of membership.

Considering support for Eurosceptic arguments, out of the eight arguments listed in the questionnaire (see Table 1 below), the argument most MPs identify with is criticism of EU bureaucracy, with 72 percent of all the respondents supporting it. This is hardly surprising, considering Norwegian traditions of people democracy (*folkestyre*) and transparent, accountable government, elements that are central to the geo-historical thesis. The primary sector argument is the second most prevalent, supported by all Liberal, Centre and SLP MPs and a majority of CDP and Labour MPs. This is the argument that is most prominent among Labour respondents, but it is not very significant for the PP MPs, with only 17 percent backing it. This reflects the fact that the PP is the only party in the party system which favours significant cuts in state subsidies to Norwegian farmers. Among PP MPs, of the arguments listed[13], sovereignty and the cost of membership get the most support. The latter is a particularly striking finding, as the high support for this item is something unique to the PP: 11 of the 24 PP respondents are concerned about the economic cost of EU membership, but only three of the 65 participants from the other parties are. The high support for the cost argument and the low support for eastward enlargement suggest that issues of economic utility, as well as sovereignty, are central to the PP's Euroscepticism.

[12] All the LP MPs who participated in the survey declared themselves to be against EU membership.
[13] Disregarding the bureaucracy argument, which featured highest among all parties, except Labour, where the argument about the primary sector ranked marginally higher.

Table 1: MPs' attitudes towards traditional 'no'-arguments

Which of the following arguments against Norwegian EU membership do you support?							
	Party						
EU membership would...	CoP	Lab	PP	CDP	LP	CP	SLP
... add unnecessary bureaucracy	7 47%	14 52%	20 83%	6 100%	3 100%	8 100%	6 100%
... damage the agricultural and fisheries sectors	3 20%	15 56%	4 17%	4 67%	3 100%	8 100%	6 100%
... threaten national sovereignty	0	8 30%	13 54%	2 33%	2 67%	8 100%	4 67%
... rob Norway of its current influential position in foreign affairs	0	4 15%	5 21%	3 50%	1 33%	6 75%	4 67%
... threaten Norwegian districts policy and municipalities	0	2 7%	1 4%	2 33%	3 100%	6 75%	3 50%
... be too expensive	0	0 0%	11 46%	1 17%	0	1 13%	1 17%
... threaten the Norwegian welfare state	0	6 22%	1 4%	0	1 33%	4 50%	3 50%
... threaten Norwegian culture and heritage	0	2 7%	3 13%	1 17%	0	2 25%	1 17%

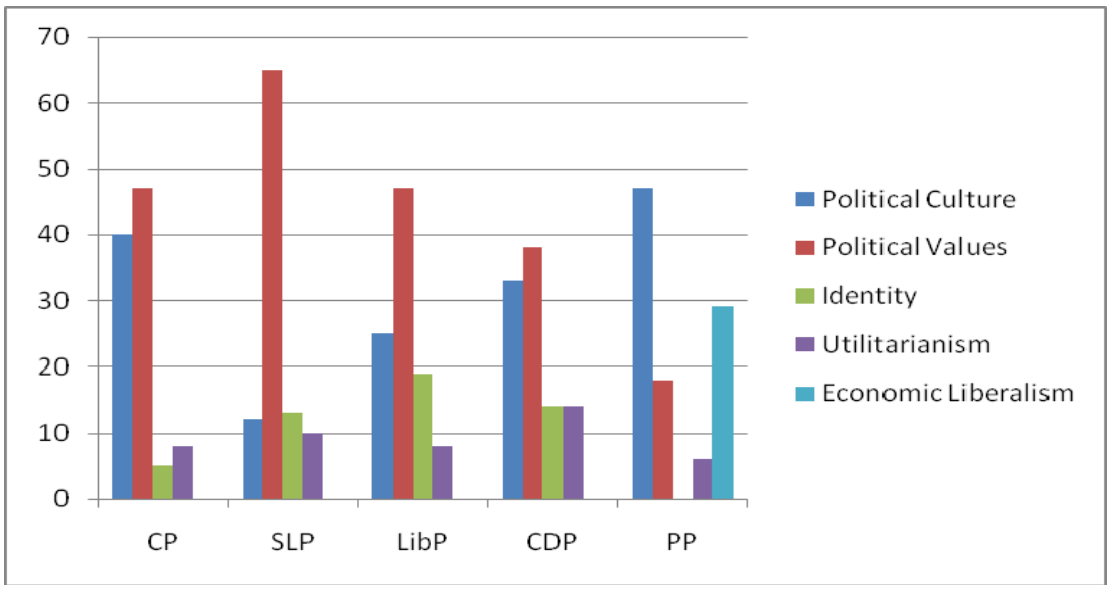
Source: author's (2006) elite survey

National sovereignty is obviously at the core of the CP's Euroscepticism, and is also central to most of the SLP and LP MPs. In the CDP, however, the arguments seem primarily to revolve around bureaucracy and the primary industries. Protection of the municipalities and districts policy is key to the CP and LP, but the SLP and CDP MPs are not mobilised to the same extent here. Also the argument of safeguarding 'Norway's influential position in foreign affairs', an argument with strong exceptionalist connotations, was met with support in the officially Eurosceptic parties, especially the CP, SLP and the CDP. However, the cultural threat thesis is not backed up by the survey data, as a mere ten percent of respondents thought EU membership would have a negative impact on Norwegian culture and heritage.

Findings of the content analysis

According to the findings of the documentary analysis, displayed in Figure 4 below, the CP, SLP, LP, CDP's Euroscepticism seem to be primarily driven by political values (post-materialism/exceptionalism), in other words, values that are seen as different or superior to those championed by the EU and are viewed as irreconcilable with EU membership. Examples of these values are morality, redistribution and equality, environmentalism, international solidarity and focus on peace-keeping efforts and Norway's role in the world (internationalism). In the centre parties, the CP, the CDP and the LP, this is closely followed by political culture elements, such as democracy and sovereignty. That exceptionalist values and democracy should be the dominant catalysts of Euroscepticism in the three centre parties is not surprising considering that, traditionally, they draw their electoral support from the peripheral and rural inhabitants, who have historically been the defenders of the unique Norwegian democracy, culture and values against forces of centralisation, urbanisation and Europeanisation (Rokkan 1967).

Figure 4: Distribution of codes



Source: author's manifesto study

In the anti-capitalist SLP, however, the contrasts between the category that ranks in first place and the others are much more marked. Not only is the percentage of the party's references to political values much higher than in the other parties, there are no significant differences between the number of references to the other three pre-defined categories. This suggests that the left-wing opposition in Norway is primarily driven by post-materialist or exceptionalist concerns, whereas among the centre parties, issues of political culture are almost equally important motivators for their Euroscepticism.

The PP, on the other hand, is different altogether. Political values are not very central to the party's Euroscepticism; instead, political culture elements and economic liberalist concerns are mobilised in opposition to the EU in the PP. The PP is the only party to criticise EU policies for being too 'socialist' and it is also the party with the highest proportion of its Eurosceptic arguments being linked to democratic concerns and sovereignty.

The remaining pre-defined categories, identity and utilitarianism, generate the least results for all parties.[14] This indicates that the identity (rural/national) and utilitarian theses have limited explanatory power when it comes to Norwegian party-based Euroscepticism. However, in the PP's case, it could be argued that its economic liberalist Euroscepticism is driven by economic utilitarianism, due to its inherent focus on economic growth. Moreover, if one looks to the survey data, then it does seem that the PP MPs' EU attitudes are, to a large extent, motivated by economic concerns.

When it comes to the rural identity category, which is based on the notion that Euroscepticism is a product of people's concern for the countryside and the rural/periphery element of the national identity, there is strikingly little reference to this category in the manifestos of any of the parties. Furthermore, in addition to the PP, whose Euroscepticism lacks concern for the primary sector and the periphery's interests completely, the agrarian CP is the party with the least reference to the primary sector and districts policy as a proportion of its arguments. This contrasts with the results of the elite survey, where the argument on the primary sector attracted the strongest support. A possible explanation for this could be issue priorities in the manifestos; if the party has "issue ownership" of an issue (Budge and Farlie 1983), like the CP does with the primary sector and peripheries' interests, they might not feel that it is necessary to mention that issue as often to the voters. Nevertheless, it appears that, to the Eurosceptic parties to the left of the PP, *exceptionalist* values are more central to the case against EU membership than *rural* values, although it should be noted that these could overlap somewhat, as Dahl (1984) highlights. This is also illustrated in Figure 1 above.

Discussion and conclusion

When considering different types of Euroscepticism in the Norwegian party system, complex typologies are arguably of limited usefulness. This is because it is, as a rule, cast as opposition to membership of the EU, and except for the hard/soft typology developed by Taggart and Szczerbiak (2001), no conceptualisation accounts for nuances in 'rejecting'-Euroscepticism.

The evidence presented above shows that, of the Norwegian parties, the CP is 'hardest' in its Euroscepticism, but that there is very little that separates the CP from the SLP. Both parties are united in their rejection of membership of both the EU and the EEA and the vast majority of EU initiatives, eastward enlargement excepted. The CDP and the LP clearly represent a 'softer' type of Euroscepticism than the above-mentioned parties. Not only are there pro-European MPs within the party, they are broadly in favour of Norway's participation in the EEA and a number of other policy areas, such as Schengen, the Single Market and the CFSP. Nevertheless, there are elements that unite the four officially Eurosceptic parties, other than their opposition to membership, namely their overall positive attitudes towards (eastward) enlargements, their joint concern for Norwegian democracy, sovereignty, the primary industries, and the districts.

Conversely, the PP diverges from the Euroscepticism of the other parties in nearly all aspects. It is the party with the largest number of undecided MPs (nine of the 35 respondents in the 2009 survey); it is the party with the absolute greatest mobility between the 'yes', 'no' and 'don't know' camps; and it displays a right-wing Euroscepticism, unique in the Norwegian party system. The only element that the PP's Euroscepticism shares with the other parties is the concern for sovereignty and democracy; otherwise, its arguments are

[14] Only the LP had comparatively more of its items coded to the identity variable than the other parties, but as with the CDP, this variation is not likely to be of any statistical significance. This is because of the limited sample: the total number of coded units of analysis for the two parties were 37 for the LP and 24 for the CDP.

very different to the other parties'. Whereas 91 percent of the officially Eurosceptic parties' MPs are worried about the primary sector, only 17 percent of the PP MPs are. The PP MPs are also the odd ones out when it comes to utilitarian considerations: only 13 percent of the CDP, LP, CP and SLP MPs care about the cost of membership, but almost half of the PP MPs note cost as an important 'no' argument. Furthermore, the eastward enlargements are the most supported EU initiatives by the Eurosceptics from the other parties, but in the PP, the enlargements get the least support of all policy areas. However, it is not clear whether it is economic considerations in connection to financial transfers or resistance to increased immigration from Eastern European countries that drives this opposition.

An analysis of party manifestos was conducted in order to test an alternative theoretical framework to explain the motivation of Eurosceptic positions in Norwegian parties. This is because the strategy model which has been advanced in the literature on party-based Euroscepticism is of limited applicability to the Norwegian case, where, with the exception of the PP, party stances have remained stable over the last 50 years. Although the data coded was somewhat limited for some of the parties, the analysis provided some interesting findings. Besides, the fact that the findings from the manifesto study overall are consistent with the survey results adds to the validity of the findings.

First, when it comes to the motivation behind the different parties' Euroscepticism, the national identity theory can immediately be discounted for all parties. Very few items were coded to this category in the manifesto study, and only nine of the 89 participants in the 2006 survey agreed with the cultural threat argument in connection to EU membership. However, although the content analysis reflected less concern about the primary industries than expected, the survey showed that the districts and primary sector elements of Norwegian opposition to EU membership are still very prominent in the centre and left-wing parties. Nevertheless, no evidence was found to support the idea that this is linked to the protection of a rural identity. It should also be noted that although support for the CAP is low in all parties, there is an important difference in the PP's and the other parties' motivation behind this opposition. The PP is not opposed to the CAP because of the detrimental effects it would have on the Norwegian agricultural sector, but because it is a barrier to free trade.

Second, utilitarianism cannot explain the occurrence of Euroscepticism in the SLP and centre parties, but this explanation could go some way to explain the PP's opposition towards EU membership. In the manifesto study, economic liberalist argumentation came up as the second most frequent category in the PP, and the cost/benefit tendencies which shone through in responses from PP MPs further support this contention. However, economic calculus cannot alone account for the PP's Euroscepticism; both the content analysis and the survey results show that elements of political culture such as sovereignty and democracy are just as important.

In the other four parties, the documentary analysis suggests that there is a difference between the motivation of the SLP on the one hand, and the centre parties on the other. Although all four parties' Euroscepticism seems to be primarily driven by political values (exceptionalism/post-materialism), in the centre parties, political culture is almost equally important. In SLP manifestos, however, political culture forms a much smaller part of the party's argumentation. Considering that post-materialism is a phenomenon most commonly associated with the political left, it does make sense that post-materialist sentiments are stronger in the SLP. Besides, as the SLP has stated that the party is not principally against supranationalism, it is to be expected that resistance to giving up national sovereignty make up a smaller part of the party's anti-EU argumentation. Also, the survey indicates that the SLP MPs are less tied to the sovereignty principle than CP MPs.

Table 2: Explaining Euroscepticism in Norwegian political parties

	Political values	*Political culture*	*Identity*	*Utilitarianism*
PP		X		X
CDP	X	X		
LP	X	X		
CP	X	X		
SLP		X		

Table 2 above provides a summary of how the different Norwegian parties' Euroscepticism can best be explained, according to the research carried out in this article. However, as the documentary data analysed was quite limited, for future research it would be appropriate to apply the analytical framework used to a larger sample in order to verify these findings. It would be particularly interesting to see if the primary sector and the issue of rural values and traditions are more pertinent to Euroscepticism in the centre and left-wing parties than was found in this study, as the survey points to the primary sector as one of the most important arguments against EU membership.

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