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EURO-SCEPTICISM AS PARTY STRATEGY: PERSISTENCE AND CHANGE IN PARTY-BASED OPPOSITION TO EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The parties that have adopted principled or contingent positions opposed to participation in European integration span across most of the political spectrum. Yet even a cursory glance at the European scene reveals that the mainstream centre-left and right parties tend not to adopt principled Euro-scepticism, although they may oppose aspects of European integration when policy preferences clash. With a few significant exceptions, principled opposition has been constrained to parties at the flanks of the system or parties that represent specific interests or identities. Starting the premise that a party's decision to adopt or modify a Euro-sceptic stance is a strategic decision, the present paper explores the roots of party-based Euro-scepticism and the dynamics of its persistence and change. Party strategy is linked inextricably to the party's position in the party system, and is made up of the party's efforts to reconcile the four main goals that almost define political parties: organisational survival and the pursuit of policy, votes and office. Although many, if not most, parties pursue the kind of strategies that are associated with the catch-all or cartel model of political parties, a significant number of parties have chosen alternative or mixed strategies. Parties' propensities for and incentives regarding Euro-scepticism are explored in relation to these different strategies. The questions are, why do parties adopt Euro-sceptic positions, and why do they change these? The 'taming of the shrew', or softening of Euro-scepticism, may be driven by changes in any of the four goals or the context in which they are pursued, or a combination thereof.

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 its 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 conceived in dichotomous terms,

opposition to participation in European integration has manifest itself in a range of positions ranging from absolute opposition to any association with the EU to scepticism about particular common policies or initiatives. Euro-scepticism entails opposition to something specific, but there is considerable variety in the bases for this opposition. This diversity in the bases on which parties greet European integration with scepticism suggests that it 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 that between opposition to European integration in principle and more contingent opposition linked to specific interests of policies. Szczerbiak & Taggart's (2000) 'hard' and 'soft' labels are now widely used to capture this distinction. Although even this dichotomy is not absolute, but may allow for 'shades of blue' (Batory 2002), it provides for pertinent rough classification inasmuch as 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 Euro-scepticism or the intensity of contingent Euro-scepticism decreases. A small number of parties have even abandoned Euro-scepticism altogether. In what follows, these dynamics are explored in terms of party strategy.

If extended, the argument that Euro-scepticism is better approached in terms of party strategy and patterns of opposition suggests that Euro-scepticism may be thought of as an 'empty box' into which a broad range of policy position can be put. If so, 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, leaving aside for a moment the question of the extent to which some Euro-sceptics base opposition on well-informed or up-to-date knowledge of the EU (Ref to EUI paper on this). Therefore, although EU policies may be 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 shaped by the fact that it is cast to some extent in opposition to an existing policy. Second, most Euro-scepticism is expressed in terms of policy not only at the EU level but also at the national level. Opposition to European integration or EU policy 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 presumably subscribe to for any given policy debate. A degree of consistency across these 'policy alleles' within a party is usually sought, and policy-based 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 competitors at the domestic level, and potentially Euro-sceptic parties may therefore be crowded out if their main competitors have already adopted a form of Euro-scepticism, or conversely, face incentives to magnify opposition if their competitors are pro-EU parties featuring Euro-sceptic factions or voters. Perhaps the only common basis that most, but not all, 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 unit 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 policy content, 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) actors' perspective, the elaboration and modification of stances on European integration is considered a matter of party strategy. If (drawing on Sartori 1976, and Strom 1990; Pennings 1998) parties are defined as organisations that seeks 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, which in most cases is a question of coalition games. The first section, below, outlines three broad strategies that constitute responses to these challenges, the first of which 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.

PARTY STRATEGY: THREE PATTERNS OF OPPOSITION IN EUROPE

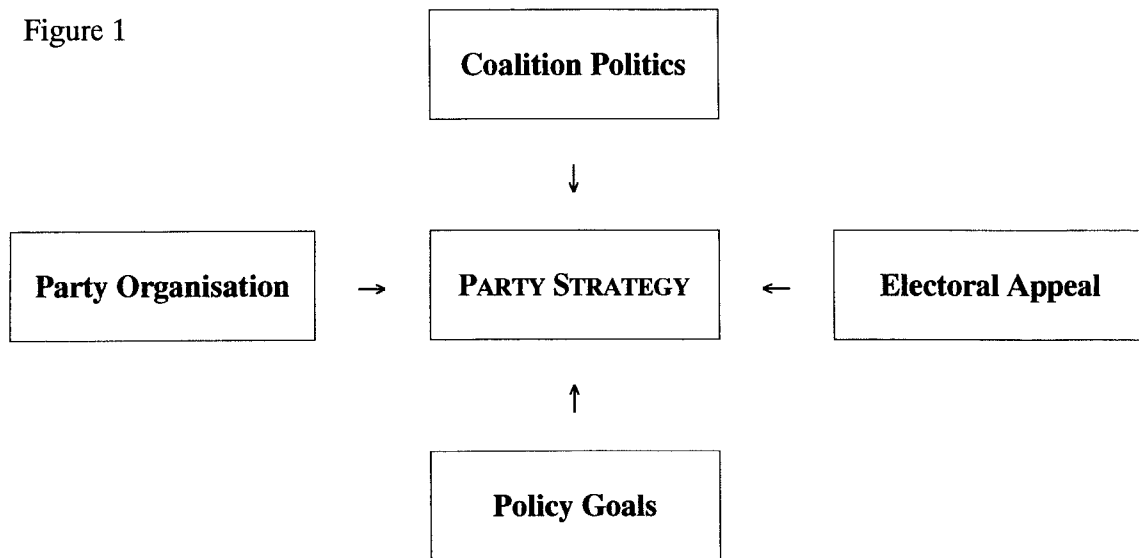
Although broad trends in party organisation, electoral competition and policy positions are often observed in Europe over time, this should not obscure that fact that distinct types of party strategy persist. The extent to which parties adapt and change depends on their organisation and preferences, and on how they interpret challenges, almost as much as on the actual challenges. 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 'wing' parties (Duverger 1954; Epstein 1967) or the catch-all parties on the centre-right (Kirchheimer 1966), others have proven more resistant to such pressure. Katz & Mair's (1995, 2002) find that many catch-all parties are becoming more modern 'cartel' parties, but proceed to point out that these parties face challengers in the form of for example protest parties (Wolinetz 2002). Across Western Europe a number of parties have found the catch-all model difficult to imitate, or actively eschewed this model, from communist parties (Bosco 2000) and greens (Richardson & Rootes 1995) on the left flank to agrarian or rural (Arter 2001) and denominational parties (Hanley 1994) in the centre, to new populist parties on the right (Taggart 1995). Comparable ranges of strategies have been attempted, with varying degrees of success, in post-communist East Central Europe (Sitter 2002). These alternatives are a matter of strategy rather than party organisation. Even though a party's organisation may affect its strategy, it is possible that a party adopt some of the organisational features or tactics of the catch-all or cartel models such as more full time professional party officials, more reliance on public funding, decreased

reliance on activist mass membership in campaigns, more use of the media or external public relations support and pollsters, it does not necessarily follow that a party abandon its focus on a clearly delineated share of the electoral market or its protest against the consensus of the informal cartel of governing parties. In other words, even if party organisations and tactics may converge, strategies for competition may remain different if some parties decide not to attempt to catch all of the electorate.

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 interest of a specific part of the electorate (interest representation), or capture general protest against the mainstream consensus (protest), is presumed to be 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 goals, 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; Strom 1990; Shepsle 1996). The pursuit of votes, policy and office are thus linked, but maximising one may require merely satisficing one of the other. To complicate this relationship further a fourth goal – survival of the party – may be inferred by drawing on the literature on party organisation (Panbianco 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. Linked, or nested, games therefore take place at different levels, within and between parties and coalitions (Tsebelis 1990). In the light of the divisive impact of the question of EU membership on the social democrat parties in Scandinavia and Britain, this last point is far from trivial. If survival of the party, or at least its leadership, is taken to include maintaining party unity and avoiding splits, this goal is sometimes of considerable, if not overriding, importance with respect to Euro-scepticism (Saglie 2000). This is in turn 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 four goals are set out in figure 1.

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 disciplines 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 three 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 and internal organisation, as well as links to external sponsoring organisations. Parties may remain committed to their original goals, or outgrow them over time as they are achieved or lose salience. Parties 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 appeals to one or more particular core constituencies and broad catch-all appeal. Moreover, Dunleavy (1991) distinguishes between effort to accommodate voters' preferences (as in Down's model, 1957) and efforts to shape or influence voters' preferences. Downs himself notes that the centripetal logic of competition toward the position of the median voter holds only under certain conditions, two-party competition, and that in other cases parties may face incentives for centrifugal competition. Fourth, coalition games by definition involve compromise with competitors. Drawing on the post-war West European experience, three broad sets of party strategies are suggested. The first is linked to the catch-all and cartel models of party organisation, and, as suggested above, the second and third represent alternative strategies for competition.

Party Strategy and Patterns of Opposition

Although some of the attributes that characterise the cartel and catch-all party ideal types feature in most parties, these models are linked to a particular, dominant, form of political party. In Kirchheimer and Katz & Mair's analyses the dynamic process that leads toward the catch-all and cartel model is one in which the two major parties respond to and imitate each other's successful innovations in organisation and campaigns. The old, candidate-driven elite parties were challenged by the advent of well-organised socialist 'wing' or mass parties that could draw on the support of trade unions and a mass membership for labour-intensive campaigns, appealing to a large section of the electorate on the basis of a 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 declining importance of the mass membership, the increasing role of the media in campaigns, and focus on salient issues rather than divisive ideologies, the result is the catch-all ideal type. This entails a shift toward more professionalized parties, more independent of external organisations, that focus on competence and managerial skills as much as issues, and employ campaigns that are more akin to public relations campaigns. It is associated with a shift in the party's income, from membership dues to a wider range of contributions to state subsidies; and a shift from parties that represent society to the state, to catch-all parties that link state and society to cartel parties that come 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. To the extent that it is carried out by two or three strong parties, it defines left and right in any 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 since 1989, but yielded outcomes that sometimes makes 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. Parties face a fundamental choice whether to seek to shape the main dimension of the party system and to 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 a series of parties that focus on representing specific ethnic or cultural minorities, economic interests or regional autonomy, or a combination thereof, 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 in relation to the catch-all parties. Both electoral competition and coalition games makes such alignment obligatory, but most agrarian, religious and regional parties in Western Europe have aligned themselves between the social democrat left and liberal/conservative

right. The second pattern of opposition is therefore opposition and competition across the left vs. right axis, focussing on the interests (here taken to include identity) of a specific constituency. Come the 1970s a number of interest groups attempted to engage more directly in the political process by forming single-issue parties, of which only the greens have met with lasting success. A common feature of all these parties is that the organisation tends to retain stronger power over the leadership than in the catch-all model, partly because they are organised around a stricter set of interest or identities. Ideology, or commitment to the party's original aim is therefore likely to be considerable. 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 have opted to 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 more extreme anti-system variety, opposing contemporary liberal democracy. 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 as coalition partners. Come the 1970s a series of new populist parties began to crowd out these parties on the left and right flanks, in the shape of far right and anti-tax protest parties on the right and socialist left, radical and green parties on the left flank. They thus constitute the third pattern of opposition, at the flanks of the system (even if placing these parties on the socio-economic left vs. right dimension is sometimes problematic). 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 have featured a flatter organisation and stronger ideology than their mainstream social democrat rivals. They have tended to be excluded from coalition games, not least by their immediate mainstream neighbours, although this may be changing since the end of the cold war. Far right and/or populist parties have participated in government in Italy, Austrian 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 on the right originally combined populist appeal with single-issue focus (anti-tax), and have since made more concerted efforts to establish themselves as more mainstream parties (Harmel & Svasand 1997). *Forza Italia*, which was launched from scratch in the run-up to the 1994 election and modelled partly on the AC Milan football team supporters club, epitomises the transformation from new populist party to mainstream centre-right party that defines one end to the tight vs. left dimension in Italian politics (Donovan 1994). In a less clear-cut fashion Meciar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia achieved something similar, defining one pole of the main dimension of government vs. opposition competition, if not the 'right' in any conventional sense of the word except as nationalist. Other parties have moved toward catch-all party strategies at various times, perhaps epitomised by the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish agrarian parties' name change to Centre parties between 1957 and 1965 (Arter 2001). The result has been 'both-and' parties (Arter 1999), or parties that employ catch-all strategies within

a region, rural or regional interest parties with appeals which are broader than their original focus.

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

Party Strategy and Euro-Scepticism

For most political parties Euro-scepticism – the elaboration of a platform that opposed participation in (aspects of) European integration – has been a deliberate and explicitly considered choice (see country cases in Taggart & Szczerbiak 2003). This may be considered a question of party strategy, and as such linked to the three types of strategy and patterns of opposition 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 a considerable degree of ideological commitment, and partly because the integration process has been very much a government-driven process. However, governments that find themselves considerably to the left or right of the European consensus, such as the UK Labour party in the early 1980s or the Conservatives under Hague and Duncan Smith, may face greater incentives to adopt Euro-sceptic stances. This has been linked to the development of EU economic policy (Marks & Wilson 1996; Hooghe, Marks & Wilson 2002), but has also been associated with spells of opposition. Parties in governments tend to defend inter-governmental deals to which they have been party (Hix & Lord 1996), whereas electoral defeat tends to open for debate over party strategy and it is more difficult to mobilise supported when in opposition (Franklin, Marsh & McLaren 1994). By contrast, the interest-oriented and protest strategies lends 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 2003).

These dynamics are explored further in the three sections that follow below. The two long term goals that shape strategy – related to party organisation and policy preferences – make up the basis for a party’s tendency toward Euro-scepticism, but the more immediate concerns of maximising votes and winning office may provide incentives to moderate these more principles stances on European integration (figure 3).

Figure 3A – long terms goal and incentives for Euro-scepticism

	The party’s origin and identity, in terms of salience to members	
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 terms goal and incentives faced by Euro-sceptic parties

	Vote-seeking	
Coalition government	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

The elaboration and revision of Euro-scepticism therefore becomes a four-step process. The first two steps entail evaluation of the compatibility of the party’s identity and core policy preferences with participation in European integration (figure 3a). The third step entails a cost-benefit calculation with regard to the party’s core or target electorate, or rather its alignment on European integration compared to the party. This in turn depends partly on the party’s competitors, and specifically the positions on European integration adopted by it most threatening competitors. The fourth, more contingent, step is the assessment of possible costs or benefits that Euro-scepticism might involve in terms of participation in coalition government (figure 3b). Parties in government, or parties that aspire to government have tended to eschew hard Euro-scepticism. However, given that the strategies of cross-cutting and flanking opposition entail at least partial rejection of catch-all competition, these dynamics cannot be expected to play out the same way across the three strategies.

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 long-term evolution and its origins 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 and the context in which they emerged help prevent problematic classifications of for example the Scandinavia protestant Christian parties as continental-style Christian democrats or agrarian parties as part of the liberal party family. Although parties can and do change considerably, and may transcend their original aims and organisation, a degree of organisational continuity and maintenance of core ideas characterise most parties. Party origins and core identity 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 supposing that Euro-scepticism is the exception rather than the rule in Europe. The Gellnerian definition of nationalism sits uneasily with both socialist and liberal ideology (Schopflin 1993, 1995). Even if liberals have at times allied with nationalist, their respective primary focus on the individual and community are at least potentially problematic. Something similar holds for socialism's primary focus on class, even if several socialist parties have sought to defend socialism at the domestic level from a perceived threat from free-market European integration. In both cases Euro-scepticism, or alliances with nationalism, are contingent. On the centre-right, Catholic Christian democracy's acceptance of the supranational church and its doctrine of subsidiary meant that multi-layered authority and the principles behind European integration were hardly unfamiliar (Wilke & Wallace 1990). Even free market conservatives, particularly Scandinavia, have often found supranational arrangements an acceptable price for free trade, though the British and Czech cases suggest that this may be more contingent on policy relative to that of the EU. Only more protectionist or traditionalist strands of conservatism, some of which emerged as significant in post-communist East Central Europe, are ideologically more 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 for electoral competition, and much the same holds for the social democrat and reform communist parties in East Central Europe, which in any case could hardly invoke the discredited socialist (and by implication also social democrat) ideology. The East Central European centre-right is however divided between the parties that sought to invoke a 'return to the West' and borrow from their West European counterparts and those that invoked the inter-war historical legacy. The latter, and those that model themselves on British Thatcherites, are more prone to Euro-scepticism in terms of their origins and ideology.

The second factor related to parties' origins and structures that might shape tendencies toward Euro-scepticism 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 open for the incorporation of factions that incorporate nationalism in their ideological profile. To the extent that these factions are at the flanks of the parties or

are associated with protectionist interests, or more traditionalist nation-oriented conservative 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 incorporated in the mainstream parties, albeit often at the margins. In either case, the challenge for catch-all parties is how to handle internal dissent on the European question without prompting secession.

The third element that may shape parties long-term broad pro- or anti-European commitment is external organisations that sponsor the party. The catch-all model entails a decline in extra-parliamentary organisations' influence, and there are few if any examples of organised interests shaping a catch-all party's stance on European integration. However, to the extent that trade unions have proven protectionist, they have made for or strengthened Euro-sceptic strands within social democrat parties in cases where the EU is perceived as more free-market oriented than the state. In post-communist East Central Europe there has been some scope for such protectionist concern on the centre-right as well, from Churches as well as from the trade union wing of Solidarity in Poland. The principal sources of scepticism towards European integration have been linked to policy rather than ideology or the origins of the parties.

The principal exceptions to these generalisations are parties that have eschewed the catch-all strategy and have retained focus on the ideology that prompted the forming of the party in the first place, and therefore also tighter organisations. Most 'third' parties have been formed to defend or represent a specific interest or a minority identity that was not integrated into the mainstream parties, or as protest parties. Norway provides the two classic examples, where the old illiberal left political camp spawned two new parties during the interwar era, an agrarian party that was 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 region, but of all the Nordic agrarian parties only the Danish one adopted a catch-all strategy and thereby transcended its interest-based origins (Bille 1994; Arter 2001). Like the Northern Irish unionist parties these peripheral parties have perceived the EU as a threat to their core ideology and values, and the Norwegian party still does, as do the East Central European agrarian parties (Batory & Sitter 2003). The defence of a specific interest, minority identity or local political autonomy may therefore provide ideological basis for Euro-scepticism if the EU is seen as an extension of the liberal national centre rather than a counter-balance. However, the Swedish case, in which the farmers' association took the lead converting the party to a pro-EU stance, highlights the importance of interest organisations for agrarian parties (Ryden 2000). The Scandinavian Christian parties have taken a more ambivalent approach to European integration than their continental counterparts in Western Europe, based partly on their dissident origins (Madeley & Sitter 2003). However, elsewhere the EU has been seen as the ally of minorities and regional parties rather than a threat (De Winter 2001).

Finally the origins of parties that have roots in protest against the national party system or consensus make fertile ideological ground for opposition to European integration

inasmuch as opposition at one level may be extended to opposition at the other. This is the core of Taggart's 'touchstone of dissent' thesis, which concludes that ideology is important in shaping Euro-scepticism and that "protest parties may use their position on the EU as one means of differentiating themselves from the established parties" (1998:382). Parties that adopt ethnic approaches to nationalism (defining membership of the nation in terms of ethnicity rather than citizenship, Smith 1983) are obvious candidates for Euro-scepticism. East Central Europe boasts the key examples, from Meciar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (Henderson 2001) to Poland's League of Polish Families (Szczepiak 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 both 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 interest-oriented, protest or mixed competitors suggests that there are considerable differences as far as propensities to Euro-scepticism is concerned. With a few significant exceptions, catch-all parties provide much poorer basis for principled opposition to European integration than their competitors. Here Euro-scepticism is more likely to be represented in party factions, and the how actors handle this becomes a question of party management. How crucial tactics for handling dissent may be was amply illustrated in the contrast between the Norwegian Labour Party's campaigns in the run-up to the 1972 and 1994 referendums, the second of which was far less divisive than the first (Saglie 2000). As far as hard Euro-scepticism is concerned, the protest and interest parties provide more fertile ground.

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 contingent than identity, and may be subject to considerable evolution even if a party's identity or organisation changes more slowly. Even if a party's policy preferences remain relatively stable their correlation to 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 EU policy.

For the catch-all parties the central question has been whether and to what extent the EU represents a move from the domestic status quo in the desirable or undesirable direction with respect to the role of the government in economic planning, extent of welfare systems and economic redistribution. This model explains the propensity of the centre-right and -left parties to resist or welcome European integration as the EU has moved between free market orientation, or negative, integration and regulation-oriented, or positive, 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). A similar point could be

made with respect to foreign policy. The combination of economic policy, corporatism, neutrality and consensual democracy in Sweden during the cold war made up the 'membership diamond' of policy priorities threatened by EU membership, but change dramatically with the end of the cold war (Miles 1997:17). 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. The prospects of a deal with the EU on fisheries induced similar, if less radical, conversions in the ranks of the Social Democrat and Progressive (agrarian) parties in Iceland in 2002-2003. In post-communist East Central Europe the question is complicated by the 'underdeveloped' nature of the conservative right (Schopflin 1993). To the extent that conservative parties focus more on collective values than the free-market, they parties have more policy 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. However, in the Czech Republic Klaus' Civic Democrats (ODS) adopted much the same approach as the soft Euro-sceptics 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 often appear to be the key to Euro-scepticism. At least this is what the few but significant cases of Euro-sceptic 'territorial' interest parties turning pro-EU suggest. A combination of Pietism, defence of national sovereignty and specific concerns such as the EU alcohol policy shaped opposition on the part of the Norwegian Christian People's Party and the Finnish Christian League (SKL 1999). However, the latter has since reversed its Euro-scepticism, partly as a consequence of EU membership now being a reality (SKL 2003). Likewise, whereas the Nordic agrarian parties (with the exception of the catch-all like Danish *Venstre*) share ideological bases that are conducive to Euro-scepticism because the parties represent the periphery against a pro-EU centre, much of their difference may be explained in terms of policy preferences. The Swedish party converted to a pro-EU stance in the wake of the Social Democrats' U-turn, but this was to a large extent driven by a re-evaluation of the benefit of membership of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy and access to the Single European Market (Ryden 2000). A similar process is underway with respect to fisheries 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).

Its is less surprising that most salient policy positions of parties that operate on the left and right flanks of the party systems tend to conflict with EU policies, if only because the policies of the flanking parties after all constitute protest against the mainstream consensus, particularly on socio-economic and foreign policy. That left-socialists and unreconstructed communists oppose European integration as a capitalist free market project is hardly surprising given the prominent role of the Single European Market in the

European integration process (Christensen 1996, 1998). That protectionist parties on the right and left flanks in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic and Slovakian have adopted similar stances is hardly surprising. In the Netherlands the new List Pim Fortuyn adopted the Euro-sceptic stance of its leader (Harmsen 2002). This question has been somewhat more problematic for the parties of the populist anti-tax parties on the far right in countries for which EU membership would entail pressure for lower taxes, freer trade and lower prices. Hence the mixed or even pro-EU strategies adopted by the Norwegian and Swedish populist parties on the right, even if they may share their Danish counterparts' suspicions of EMU as an interventionist project. If anything, however, the Norwegian party has dropped its support for EU membership, returning to its older ambivalent stance. So far, left-socialist parties have proven far more resistant to adjusting their stance on the EU in the light of enlargement, although the anti-capitalist rhetoric on the Scandinavian far left has been toned down.

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. These are closely related to the type of overall strategy a party pursues. Catch-all parties are less prone to ideological opposition to European integration, but many have opposed aspects of European integration when domestic and EU policy jar. At this level, changes in stances on European integration could therefore be explained in terms of policy, particularly economic and foreign policy. However, the same is not the case for interest or protest parties, for which policy preferences and the ideological origins of the party correlate more strongly. In both cases the motive for party formation in the first place has tended to be protest or opposition, often directed against a consensus at the domestic level that may be projected further to protest against consensus at the EU level. Policy change is therefore less significant in terms of explaining party changes in Euro-scepticism, except in cases of adjustment to major EU policy developments.

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 participation in office affects the way this is translated into actual stances against (aspects of) European integration. 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, which suggests that parties should reflect public opinion on European integration. The more party-oriented approach applied to adversary politics in the UK allows for party positions that reflect the party's median voter or activist. However, this raises questions about parties' strategies for electoral competition, particularly whether they seek to accommodate voters' preferences or attempt to influence or shape preferences (Dunleavy 1991). Although the catch-all strategy is usually associated with Downsian competition, some catch-all parties have occasionally chosen platforms that pull the party towards the left or right flank rather than the centre. The British Conservatives and *Forza Italia* both adopted somewhat more centrifugal electoral strategies 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 crosscutting dimensions inasmuch as the face tradeoffs between targeting their core constituency or seeking to attract votes from a broader part of the 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, this dilemma is accentuated by the choices made by a party's closest competitors. Both the Smallholders and the Hungarian Justice and Life Party on the far right have been crowded out to some extent by the main centre-right party Fidesz' soft Euro-scepticism (Batory 2002). Even parties that compete on the flanks of the party system therefore face a potential trade-off between maintaining their protest-oriented electoral appeal and attempting to poach voters from their closest mainstream neighbours. The Austrian Freedom Party, Italian National Alliance and the List Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands 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 inasmuch as it has adopted an ambiguous strategy with regard to Euro-scepticism, partly to avoid alienating potential voters.

The first powerful force that might cause parties to modify or soften their Euro-scepticism is therefore the pursuit of votes. However, in most cases this has resulted in more silence on the European question than during electoral campaigns than lasting softening of Euro-scepticism. It has been easier for smaller 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.

THE QUEST FOR OFFICE – EXECUTIVE CONSTRAINTS ON EURO-SCEPTICISM

Even if identity and policy preferences are conducive to Euro-scepticism and electoral competition provides incentives to develop Euro-sceptic platforms the fourth goal of most political parties, participation in executive office, may constrain party-based Euro-scepticism. Three dynamics are potentially relevant. First, a party's electoral incentives to Euro-scepticism may depend on its nearest competitors' not having crowded out the Euro-sceptic space. To the extent that this is the case it means that the party's potential coalition partners are likely to be pro-EU, and therefore that coalition games are likely to exert a constraining effect. A similar effect might of course also operate on the pro-EU parties. However, and this is the second dynamic, in EU member states governing parties tend to be party to EU policy deals and to defend these (Hix & Lord 1996). Office tenure is therefore more likely to constrain Euro-sceptic coalition members than their pro-EU

counterparts. To the extent that applicant countries and countries that participate in aspects of European integration through the European Economic Area or bilateral agreements are party to deals with the EU they are likewise under considerable pressure to defend these. Third, spells in opposition open for a third dynamic if opposition is, as it usually is, the consequence of electoral defeat. Opposition makes it more difficult to buy off or discipline internal dissent and defeat is likely to render debated over party strategy more legitimate and salient. 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' above-mentioned populist turn in Hungary was a reassessment in the light of electoral defeat. Perhaps more significantly, several Euro-sceptic parties have softened or abandoned their Euro-scepticism when in office. In Greece, PASOK quietly dropped its opposition to participation in European integration 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 of office shaping a party's move from opposing to advocating EU membership is that of the Finnish Centre Party under Aho in 1994, when his threat to resign as party leader and prime minister secured a sceptical party's support for EU membership (Rauino 1999). Milder versions of similar developments can be found in the constraints places on *Lega Nord* in Italy, the Freedom Party in Austrian and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), all of which have softened Euro-scepticism to some extent when in office but seem prone to revert to it at election time or when in opposition. The main exception to this rule so far has been Norway, where a number of centre-right coalitions broken up over European integration in 1971 and 1990, the current centre-right coalition features a 'suicide-clause' that precludes raising the question of EU membership, and even the potential centre-left coalitions now face similar predicaments. Together with the recent collapse of the centre-right coalitions that included the Austrian Freedom Party and the List Pim Fortuyn, the centre-left coalition that included the Polish Peasant Party, the Finnish Christian League's departure from the coalition that took the country into the EU and the turbulence within Italy's centre right coalitions, this suggests that not only does office constrain Euro-scepticism, but that failure to adapt to these constraints severely jeopardises coalitions.

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. At each point 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. First, 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 the extent to which they accommodate factions. Parties that are rooted in protection on specific interests or in protest may be more prone to Euro-scepticism. Second, policy preferences may both exacerbate and undermine Euro-scepticism. To the extent that some catch-all parties have adopted Euro-sceptic 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. The two longer term strategic questions, concerning the significance of the party's core identity and its core policy preferences in shaping political competition, clearly matter. The two shorter term dilemmas, how and whether to maximise votes and how much to compromise in the pursuit of office, exert similar 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 shape in interest or protest parties, even if some catch-all parties accommodate factions that oppose EU membership. Greece's Pasok and the UK's Labour in opposition are the principal exceptions in EU member states. Although 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 therefore change, the Danish evidence is less clear-cut. For Pasok and the Finnish Centre executive office was the key to change. Even principled opposition to European integration is therefore subject to incentives for modification in the form of policy changes at the deistic or EU level, the possibility of expansion beyond the party's core electorate, and the quest for participation in office. The last two factors suggest that protest or interest parties may become the victims of their own success, if and when they begin to face the same kind of incentives to as parties that pursue a catch-all strategy.

Soft Euro-scepticism is more pervasive, and, by definition and dynamics, more contingent. However, the distinction between catch-all parties in opposition that adopt more Euro-sceptic stances and protest or issue parties that modify hard Euro-scepticism because policy alternatives or incentives change remains significant. The former is perhaps 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 constricts Euro-scepticism in practice. Even the centre-right leaders in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Italy that have employed soft Euro-sceptic rhetoric have hardly pursued Euro-sceptic policies when in office. Because soft Euro-scepticism is driven by policy, it should be 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 through change. Here interest parties that are linked to strong external organisations or clearly defined value regimes are generally less flexible. By similar logic, 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 the effect of short term incentives.

The key to parties' adoption of and changes to stances opposed to European integration therefore lies in party strategy in the wider 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 may be 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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