

## Conclusions

From the outset, the main problem of the term Euroscepticism is its conceptual vagueness by including not exactly matching semantic meanings (rejection/reservations). In this regard, it is useful to distinguish not only between respective positions, but also clarify the scope and meaning of these reservations: in short, outright rejection implies *Europhobia*, reservations (especially political) imply *Euroscepticism* in the strict sense and dissatisfaction with the current *impasse* of the actual EU that *eurocritical* postures embody. Following this through to its logical consequence, the theoretical possibility even exists to dispense with the term of Euroscepticism, although this process may already be irreversible due not only to its full academic acceptance, but also to the progressive conceptual purification and the rich empirical research that has been developed.

Euroscepticism is and is not a new *cleavage* and although European policy has traditionally had a secondary character in national States, it will become increasingly less so since many of the internal problems are interconnected with those derived from the contradictions of the actual process of integration and this is what increases politically relevant social and partisan divisions within the same. It can be said in conclusion that there is Euroscepticism both for economic reasons and for political and cultural reasons. More precisely, they are the negative evaluations in terms of cost/benefit, the rejection of the elitist and delegative style in community institutions (notoriously opaque) and a fear of losing “identity” the root causes of the phenomenon. Something that has gained widespread projection almost all the EU States and is manifested both in parties and with voters across the ideological spectrum, with different intensities depending on the country and situation.

Indeed, some parties channel such perceptions and civic feelings, while not quite matching the critical positions and policies of the parties of the radical right or left because with the former Euroscepticism is not just a waymarker, but also a principle (although most pragmatically accept carrying on in the EU), while in the latter the fundamental discrepancy is with the path itself (sharing neither the style nor the policies of the Community authorities) as there are very few who reject the principle of integration. Although it is a controversial issue, it appears that – despite obvious ideological differences – there are a few

items critical of the EU that the radical right and left share, though the emphasis on one or the other differs. To begin with, there are sectors of the electorate of these parties that may not only overlap, but may also even be interchangeable (roughly, the “losers” of the current process of European integration). Then the social discontent of significant sectors against “central block” parties and governments and against representative institutions increasingly perceived as distant, can be captured almost indistinctly by ideological parties of either ideological group. Although the radical left and right can agree on the defence of national sovereignty, they undertake this with distinct ideological criteria: ethnicity in the first instance and the defence of national sovereignty in the second. In this area there is a major antagonism between respective ideological groups with issues related to non-EU immigration and the Turkish candidacy: the radical right declares itself xenophobic while the radical left openly manifests a desire for integration. Similarly, the extent of the criticism of neoliberal politics is different – in the case of the radical right it is rather circumstantial and secondary, while for the radical left it is part of the core of their policies. Finally, regarding the “democratic deficit” of the EU itself there is a notable coincidence regarding the opacity and elitism of “Brussels”, albeit with a much more populist tone from the right than from the left.

Some analysts have hypothesised various future scenarios regarding Euro scepticism, well synthesized by Leconte: 1) marginalisation (despite the difficulties, the process of European integration is unstoppable and ongoing), 2) reinforcement (in fact, significant establishment parties have a growing Euro sceptic presence in their ranks) and 3) reforming reorientation (in this case, Euro sceptics assume that a certain kind of EU is irreversible, but with a “defederalising” reorientation from within). Given these scenarios, there could also be three responses: 1) maintain the *status quo* (not embark on any new projects of ambitious reform to avoid risk), 2) radically re-shape the EU (i.e. give way to a genuine political federation, something not feasible today given the correlation of forces) and 3) reform the EU incrementally (continue with a functionalist strategy of the lowest common denominator, the only way – with all its limitations – that allows partial progressive progress).

When classifying the variants of Euro scepticism it is relevant to recall the observation of Sczerbiak and Taggart on the inconvenience of multiplying the theoretical categories due to the difficulties in making them operative. Consequently, this study concludes with a proposal for a personal adaptation of the more nuanced model from Kopecky and Mudde based on four positions: 1) Europhiles, 2) Europragmatics, 3) Eurocritics and 4) Europhobes. The first group shares the principle of integration and the direction in which the current EU is moving, the

second group does not accept the principle, but accepts the results, the third group is the most integrationist, but rejects the current process and the fourth group rejects everything.

**Table 1**

	<b>Principle</b>	<b>Direction</b>
Europhile	YES	YES
Europragmatics	NO	YES
Eurocritics	YES	NO
Europhobes	NO	NO

Source: the author.

In any case, the term Euroscepticism is already well consolidated academically and the proposal put forward is merely a theoretical suggestion that needs to be proved with empirical tests. In this sense, this scheme can adapt to the term eurosceptical with the distinction of two subcategories of the same: not *hard* and *soft*, but those affecting “mixed” positions. In other words, the contrast between Europhiles (double yes) and Europhobes (double no), seems very clear, the position of Eurocritics and Europragmatics being more ambiguous. Both categories can be defined as eurosceptical, but in different ways: the Europragmatics being negative Eurosceptics and positive Eurocritics the positive Eurosceptics. This is: the negative Eurosceptics can accept a EU of simple intergovernmental economic cooperation, while the positive Eurosceptics believe that with the *current* direction the economic and statist limits will never be exceeded, its own supranational project being much more ambitious. With this, the resulting picture allows a reasonably systematic grouping of the main party groups: 1) Europhiles (parties of the “core block”), 2) negative Eurosceptics (conservative, agrarian), 3) positive Eurosceptics (radical left) and 4) Europhobes (radical right). Of course, this picture is merely indicative and not only supports various exceptions, but also any new partitions – in principle the bulk of the party options can fit into this area.

As a balance of affinities and differences it should be noted that there is more Europhobia on the radical right than on the radical left. This is significant because of the level of the former’s rejection of integration, something quite unusual with the latter. The objective coincidence between both is produced in the way they respond to the operational channels and methods of the present EU, albeit from different ideological perspectives. Both criticise the Community *establishment* who they feel are distant and do not generally count on them.

Consequently, the EU is perceived as an artificial web and distant, damaging to national and popular interests. This explains why the

radical right and left collect much of the discontent and protest from many of the citizens affected by the ongoing integration process.

From the outset, the principal distinctive argument the radical right has in its criticism of the EU focuses on the emphasis on national sovereignty, severely endangered – in its opinion – by “Eurocrats”. It should be noted that, while not being the primary objection of the radical left, a large part of it is sensitive to this reasoning and also opposes the transfer of new lots of national sovereignty. However, the main difference between them is the focus given to this classic concept: a focus on ethnic exclusion in the first case and the condemnation of the limitations of democracy in the second. Just as the radical right so unanimously rejects the hypothesis (from its perspective, a reality in the making) of the European superstate, the radical left (with exceptions) may not oppose this scenario, but only with very specific conditions (with another political and economic model). In short, the radical right, looking through its nativist nationalist prism, does not accept the supranational progression of the EU, nor the continuing expansion of the same. In contrast, the radical left’s principal distinctive feature of its opposition to the current EU lies in its rejection of neoliberalism, notoriously harmful to social rights. Part of the radical right is not insensitive to this argument and does not accept the current supranational economic model of the EU as it stands, serving only the interests of opaque transnational *lobbies*. This ideological group advocates a protected domestic market and a *welfare chauvinism* reserved for national citizens, elements that the radical left do not share. Finally, it criticises the democratic deficit of the EU’s institutional framework, reinforcing its belief that without a total change of system it can not be supported; a criterion the radical right partly shares in considering that the Community authorities are accountable to nobody.

**Table 2: Predominant *Items* in the discourse of opposition to the EU of the radical right and left wing (high to low)**

<b>Right</b>	<b>Left</b>
1) Yes to national closed sovereignty	1) No to neoliberalism
2) Yes to ethnic identity	2) No to democratic deficit
3) No to European federal superstate	3) Yes to national sovereignty linked to popular interests

Source: the author.

For its part, the European Parliament elections of 2009 reiterated the “secondary” character of this call to elections and the constant civic disinterest towards them. The overall result has strengthened the center-right as a whole and has also consolidated the radical right to a degree.

In turn, the decline of center-left is notable and the maintenance (with a slight downward trend) of the radical left. Therefore, despite a certain superficial impression that these elections have mainly benefited the more radical groups, the results show a more nuanced picture, a certain “freezing” of the inherited situation. In any case, the radical right has endemic difficulties to structure itself into a single parliamentary Euro-group – however, the radical left demonstrates the greater predisposition to integrate into a common entity (despite the not insignificant internal differences).

The treatment the analysed parties’ electoral manifestos give to the three chosen dimensions is very unequal – those of the radical right favour the stubborn defence of national sovereignty in its criticism of the EU while those of the radical left focus on denouncing neoliberal socio-economic policies.

Instead, a similar space is given to “democratic deficit” and therefore it is necessary to initiate a conclusive analysis from this dimension – and not only for quantitative reasons, but also because the question of democracy in the EU is qualitatively connected to the other two because it directly conditions them. The deficiencies attributed to community institutions and procedures are the ones which are projected negatively on the national interest and the social rights of the population. So, with different priorities and strategies in this triad, the radical parties of the right and left present various objective coincidences in their criticism of the EU, but with some evident, profound differences that separate both ideological groups (the issue of immigration, in particular).

The “democratic deficit” denounced by everyone crystallises in the almost unanimous rejection of the Lisbon Treaty. The critics then agree: this treaty enshrines the elitist and bureaucratic EU for reasons of both form and substance. From the first point of view, it has violated the right of citizens to voice a direct opinion and from the other, the Lisbon Treaty only preserves the opacity in the operational and decision-making processes of Community institutions. It is not unusual to detect a significant distrust of representative mechanisms in both ideological groups, albeit with a greater emphasis of this in the case of the radical right. These parties all demand – with a populist character – to “give voice” to the citizens to express their views on any reform of the Treaties, being precisely they who accept or reject further transfers of *sovereignty* to “Brussels”. In addition, the current institutional framework of the EU is totally dysfunctional, disallowing a real popular control and strengthening an unchecked “bureaucracy”. It should be noted that this criticism is much more characteristic of the manifestos of

the radical left, more inclined (due to its traditional political culture) to defend the expansion of popular participation.

**Table 3**

<b>The Lisbon Treaty:</b>	<b>Right</b>	<b>Left</b>
Imposes decisions not voted for by each national population	UKIP LN NSA PRM FN PVV	KKE CDU-PCP VP
Has not been submitted to popular referendum	VB DF FPÖ FN	SF BE KKE FG SYRZIA
Does not respect the division of powers and cedes power to a bureaucratic oligarchy	JMM DF	SF AKEL KSČM BE IU DL FG SYRZIA VP

As a block all parties of the radical right pronounce themselves in defence of the absolute primacy of national sovereignty, while with the radical left this is an issue that is only defended by some. To this first difference two other orders of consideration should be added: 1) the radical right makes an “essentialist” defence of the mythical principle of national sovereignty because, very often, this thesis has ethnic and xenophobic connotations in its discourse, 2) the radical left parties that defend this issue as a priority assert that they do so in the name of the material interests of the real population, i.e. the citizens, not of abstract doctrinal concepts. A very obvious difference is the assumption of “Christian roots” as an unequivocal identifying characteristic of European peoples that some parties of the radical right make, something entirely absent in the other ideological group given their militant secularism. In any case, the myth of national sovereignty has a very clear result: the massive rejection of the radical right of an eventual European federal state, a hypothesis that some radical left parties also reject. It is not surprising then that this criterion exists in a party like the irredentist SF or the *orthodox* Communists who have become the main

supporters of this classical notion (Czechs, Greeks, Portuguese). In nationalist parties such as those of the radical right, the rejection of political supranationalism is entirely congruent, but it is more difficult to justify on the left, given its *internationalist* tradition. The truth is that some radical left parties have effectively assumed a nationalist philosophy that they want to be *progressive* – disconnected from old ideological dogmas, but to preserve the material interests of *their* peoples in the face of an insufficiently democratic and neoliberal EU. The total rejection of political federalisation of the radical right and substantial rejection on some of the radical left, does not prevent either ideological group from accepting elements of intergovernmental European cooperation that are mutually beneficial for their peoples. However, the principal differentiating element between the radical right and left on questions related to the national community is seen with issues such as immigration or Turkey, which continue to be related. These differences are, in fact, antagonistic: for the radical right European *civilization* faces a deadly threat represented by an alleged “invasion” of non-EU immigrants, the vast majority Muslims. Indeed, Islamophobia and the xenophobic rejection of immigrants have become the main demagogic tools for the electoral growth of this type of party. In many cases, anti-immigration policies are almost the only reason for these parties to exist because they have become the resource providing more electoral dividends. In parallel, the direct and hostile opposition to Turkey’s candidacy is associated with this exclusive mentality: this country has no place in Europe, its incorporation would be unnatural, it would be a huge risk for collective security – with a deterioration of social services and an increase in crime and even terrorist threats. Apart from the apocalyptic, reactionary and unfounded ideological character of these prejudices, this is a complete contrast with the positions of the radical left. Indeed, it is in favour of the continued unrestricted reception of immigrants whose rights must be recognised, both for reasons of solidarity and even as a benefit to Europeans. It goes without saying, no party of this ideological group objects to Turkey’s candidacy – the only proviso being that it should comply with the requirements of the Copenhagen Accord.

**Table 4**

<b>National Sovereignty</b>	<b>Right</b>	<b>Left</b>
Primacy of national sovereignty	All	SF AKEL KSCM KKE CDU-PCP
No to a European federal state	PVV VB JMM LN DF FPÖ NSA FN	CDU-PCP SYRZIA VP
Yes to European intergovernmental cooperation	VB JMM LN DF LAOS FN	All
<b>National Sovereignty</b>	<b>Right</b>	<b>Left</b>
Rejection of immigration	PVV UKIP VB LN DF FPÖ FN	-
Free reception immigration	-	All

In principle, radical right parties doctrinally accept a market economy, since they reject the model of comprehensive socialisation regarded as *Marxist*. Having said this, several parties in this ideological group are against the neoliberal direction in which the current EU is going as this has negative consequences for nations and wide sectors of society. Additionally, the phenomenon of globalisation is even seen from a conspiracist viewpoint by some of them, regarding it as U.S. manoeuvre to subordinate European nations. From this stems the usual populist rejection of these groups of a greater Europeanisation of the EU as this process is interpreted as a derivation of globalisation and a subjugation of Europeans to a denationalising strategy imposed by remote centres of power. The radical right supports the market economy, but with some

conditions: strong national protectionism to defend and preserve certain productive and commercial sectors and, more recently, greater coverage and social protection for the less favoured groups (national, of course) in each country, especially in the CEE. In any case, the fact is noteworthy that in no case the welfare state as such is defended because the radical right doctrinally attributes this model to the left and often criticises it for being “partyocratic”, bureaucratic, parasitic, unsustainable and corrupt.

The radical left is against the unregulated market economy because of its serious antisocial operating methods. From this perspective, the economic policies of the current EU are discriminatory, oligarchic and undemocratic. They: 1) aggravate inequalities between a increasingly privileged minority and the majority who are having their rights cut, 2) concentrate economic and financial power in too few hands that share profits against the interests of the wider society, particularly workers, and 3) mine democracy of its meaning as representative government has fully subjugated itself to the interests of superior powers in such a way that the results of elections are irrelevant while it is impossible to change certain *structural* policies from the governments. The radical left parties demand a strengthening of the areas of public intervention and social welfare, hence their requests for regulations, controls, nationalisation and the maximum possible extension and the highest possible quality of universal social benefits. The most notable finding then is that these parties are the main defenders of the classic welfare state because, in fact, there are few who feel this is finished and *directly* defend socialism as the only possible alternative to the *system* (this is the quite exceptional case of the KKE). Being then the key to the welfare state – what can not be ignored is that this rests on a mixed economic model – the vast majority of these parties emphasise the protection of what is *public* against neoliberal policies because, in their view, social rights can not be regarded as commodities and must be considered as popular achievements inseparable from a modern democratic state.

**Table 5**

<b>Neoliberalism</b>	<b>Right</b>	<b>Left</b>
Rejection of neoliberal social and economic policies	PVV UKIP JMM FPÖ NSA PRM	All

In conclusion, it appears that there are no *Euro-enthusiasts* in either ideological group, confirming that they are far from the “centre block”

(popular, socialist, liberal) in the EP. All then, are critical of the EU, but with very different gradations, ranging from the less belligerent to the most intransigent opposers, through an intermediate majority. Effectively, both the sectorial critics that do not demand the dismantling of the current EU and those who feel the entity is lost, unrecoverable and defend abandonment and all the motley range of positions found in the parties in both ideological groups are a minority. The different attitudes must be grouped into blocks: 1) Europragmatics (minority), 2) Eurosceptics/Eurocritics (majority) and 3) Eurorejectors/Europhobes (minority). The parties of the first block are very critical with *some* EU policies, but work to change the balance of forces internally and bring them closer to their respective programmed interests. There is a coincidence here from the *extreme* Romanians and Austrians to the left wing parties with more or less achieved ambitions for *renewal* and aspirations for change in the EU. The second block, which is quantitatively greater, poses a conceptual problem with reference to the label of *Euroscepticism*: to try to be operative this concept must be conserved by parties that, fundamentally, have a strictly instrumental attitude towards the EU, i.e., the acceptance of the same as merely an entity of economic cooperation, always from clear, inviolable intergovernmental budgets. On the other hand, there are some parties of the radical left that do not fully fit into this category because although they may share many of the criticisms of the same, they are differentiated by the fact of they advocate “more Europe” at a supranational level. Finally, the third block (a small minority), maintains the exceptional position of abandoning and even dismantling the EU, considering it to be not only useless, but even irretrievable.

**Table 6**

	Euroenthusiasts		Europragmatics			
			Right		Left	
Eurooptimists			FPÖ		AKEL	
			PRM		DL	
					IU	
	Eurosceptics		Eurocritics		Eurorejectors (Europhobes)	
	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left
	DF	CDU-PCP		BE	UKIP	KKE
	FN	KSČM		FG		VP
Euroessimists	JMM	SF		SYRZIA		
	LAOS					
	LN					
	NSA					
	PVV					
	IVB					

Source: self generated from the Kopecky, Mudde table, 2002.